

# FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions

# About Flu Vaccines



### What should I know about the influenza vaccine?

- You **cannot** catch the flu from the influenza vaccine. Flu vaccines are made from influenza viruses that have been destroyed.
- A new vaccine is developed each year to prevent new strains of flu. The vaccine recommended for the 2007-2008 season includes A/Solomon Islands/3/2006 (H1N1 strain), A/Wisconsin/67/2005 (H3N2 strain) and B/Malaysia/2506/2004.
- **This vaccine does not provide protection for the Avian/Bird Flu.**
- The vaccine begins providing protective effects after about one to two weeks.
- No vaccine is 100% effective, but generally the flu vaccine protects most people. The flu shot will not protect you from other viruses that also circulate during flu season.

### Who should receive the vaccine?

*Anyone who wants to lower their chances of getting the flu should be vaccinated.*

#### People in high risk groups who should receive the vaccine include:

- All children 6 to 23 months of age
- Persons 65 years or older
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season
- People who live or work in facilities in close proximity to many other people (nursing homes, dormitories, child care centers, schools, large companies, group homes, etc.)
- Persons with heart or lung disease who are at risk of severe flu illness
- People who have required regular medical care or were hospitalized during the previous year because of a metabolic disease (like diabetes), anemia, asthma, chronic kidney disease or a weakened immune system
- Physicians, nurses, etc. (including family members) who have extensive contact with high-risk patients

### Who should not receive the vaccine?

#### Those people who should not receive the vaccine include:

- People allergic to eggs, chicken or chicken feathers
- People who have had an allergic reaction to the flu vaccine in the past
- People who are ill and have a fever.
- Women who are or may be pregnant, without first consulting with their physician
- People with heart or lung disease who are at risk of severe flu illness
- People who developed Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting a flu vaccine previously (Currently there is no evidence that the flu vaccine increases the risk for GBS recurrence in people with prior GBS unrelated to influenza vaccination.)
- Children less than 6 months of age
- People allergic to thimerosal (a mercury-based preservative used in vaccines)

### What are the risks and side effects?

*Most people who receive the vaccine either have no, or only mild reactions. Your risk of injury or death from a rare allergic reaction is far less risky than complications brought on by influenza.*

- The worst side effect is likely to be a sore arm, lasting 1 to 2 days.

For further information, please see [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or consult with your physician.

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