



Frequently Asked Influenza (Flu) Questions: 2022-2023 Season

What's New for 2022-2023

A few things are different for the 2022-2023 influenza (flu) season, including:

- The composition of flu vaccines has been updated.
- For the 2022-2023 flu season, there are three flu vaccines that are preferentially recommended for people 65 years and older. These are [Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine](#), [Flublok Quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine](#) and [Fluad Quadrivalent adjuvanted flu vaccine](#).
- The recommended timing of vaccination is similar to last season. For most people who need only one dose for the season, September and October are generally good times to get vaccinated. Vaccination in July and August is not recommended for most adults but can be considered for some groups. While ideally it's recommended to get vaccinated by the end of October, it's important to know that vaccination after October can still provide protection during the peak of flu season.

Flu Vaccine

What is CDC's recommendation for getting a flu vaccine for the 2022-2023 flu season?

Annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older, with few exceptions (Children younger than 6 months, and people with severe, life-threatening allergies to flu vaccine or any ingredient in the vaccine, which might include gelatin, antibiotics, or other ingredients). New this season, however, is a preferential recommendation for the use of higher dose and adjuvanted flu vaccines in people 65 and older over standard dose, unadjuvanted flu vaccines. More information on this new recommendation can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm>

What viruses will the 2022-2023 flu vaccines protect against?

There are many different flu viruses, and they are constantly changing. The composition of U.S. flu vaccines is reviewed annually and updated as needed. The recommendations for the 2022-2023 season include two updates compared with the recommended composition of last season's U.S. flu vaccines. Both the influenza A(H3N2) and the influenza B (Victoria lineage) vaccine virus components were updated.

The recommendations for egg-based and cell-based and recombinant flu vaccines are listed below:

Egg-based vaccine composition recommendations:

- an A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Darwin/9/2021 (H3N2)-like virus (updated);
- a B/Austria/1359417/2021-like virus (B/Victoria lineage) (updated);
- a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata lineage)

Cell- or recombinant-based vaccine composition recommendations:

- an A/Wisconsin/588/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Darwin/6/2021 (H3N2)-like virus (updated);
- a B/Austria/1359417/2021-like virus (B/Victoria lineage) (updated);
- a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata lineage).

This recommendation is the same as the Southern Hemisphere flu vaccine recommendation. For more information, visit <https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/lot-release/influenza-vaccine-2022-2023-season>

Are any of the available flu vaccines recommended over others?

Yes, for some people. For the 2022-2023 flu season, there are **three flu vaccines that are preferentially recommended for people 65 years and older**. These are *Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine*, *Flublok Quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine* and *Fluad Quadrivalent adjuvanted flu vaccine*. There is not a preferential recommendation for one of these three higher dose or adjuvanted flu vaccines over the others.

On June 22, 2022, CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted unanimously to preferentially recommend these vaccines over standard-dose unadjuvanted flu vaccines. This recommendation was based on a review of available studies which suggests that, in this age group, these vaccines are potentially more effective than standard dose unadjuvanted flu vaccines. There is no preferential recommendation for people younger than 65 years.

What if a preferentially recommended flu vaccine is not available?

If one of the three preferentially recommended flu vaccines for people 65 and older is not available at the time of administration, people in this age group should get a standard-dose flu vaccine instead.

What is the best time to get my influenza vaccine?

It's best to be vaccinated before flu begins spreading in your community. **September and October are generally good times to be vaccinated against flu. Ideally, everyone should be**

vaccinated by the end of October. However, even if you are not able to get vaccinated until November or later, vaccination is still recommended because flu most commonly peaks in February and significant activity can continue into May.

Additional considerations concerning the timing of vaccination for certain groups include:

- **Adults, especially those 65 years and older, should generally not get vaccinated early (in July or August) because protection may decrease over time, but early vaccination can be considered for any person who is unable to return at a later time to be vaccinated.**
- Some children need two doses of flu vaccine. For those children it is recommended to get the first dose as soon as vaccine is available, because the second dose needs to be given at least four weeks after the first. Vaccination during July and August also can be considered for children who need only one dose. Early vaccination can also be considered for people who are in the third trimester of pregnancy, because this can help protect their infants during the first months of life (when they are too young to be vaccinated).

Flu Activity

Will new flu viruses circulate this season?

Flu viruses are constantly changing so it's not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year.

When will flu activity begin and when will it peak?

The timing of flu is difficult to predict and can vary in different parts of the country and from

Flu Symptoms & Diagnosis

Influenza (also known as “flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. This page provides resources about flu symptoms, complications, and diagnosis.

Flu signs and symptoms usually come on suddenly. People who are sick with flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)

- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

**It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.*

Flu Treatment

If you get sick with flu, antiviral drugs may be a treatment option.

Check with your doctor promptly if you are at higher risk of serious flu complications and you get flu symptoms. People at higher risk of flu complications include young children, adults 65 years of age and older, pregnant people, and people with certain medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

When used for treatment, antiviral drugs can lessen symptoms and shorten the time you are sick by 1 or 2 days. They also can prevent serious flu complications, like pneumonia. For people at higher risk of serious flu complications, treatment with antiviral drugs can mean the difference between milder or more serious illness possibly resulting in a hospital stay. CDC recommends prompt treatment for people who have flu or suspected flu and who are at higher risk of serious flu complications.

Last Reviewed August 23, 2022

Reference:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2022-2023.htm>. Accessed 8/29/2022

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