

WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT FLU (INFLUENZA)?

Flu is caused by the influenza virus.¹ Previous infection or vaccination is no guarantee of protection against it - the flu virus is changing all the time² and there are many different strains.²

HOW SERIOUS IS FLU?

While most people have relatively mild flu symptoms; **flu is a potentially serious disease that can lead to hospitalisation and sometimes even death.**³

It can cause bronchitis, croup, pneumonia, ear infections, heart and other organ damage, brain inflammation and brain damage.¹

163,000
CASES⁴

Average number of flu cases detected in Australia each year between 2015 and 2020:⁴

1,500,000
DAYS⁴

The estimated number of work days lost to flu and its associated complications each year.⁴

HOW CAN YOU RECOGNISE THE FLU?

Flu symptoms include a runny nose or sneezing, cough or sore throat, fever and chills, headache, body aches, vomiting and diarrhoea (which is more common in children).⁵

Most flu symptoms last up to a week⁵ but coughing can continue for up to two weeks or more.⁵



Flu is **NOT** the same as a common cold, flu symptoms tend to be more intense.⁶



COVID-19 AND FLU

- It is very difficult to distinguish between the symptoms of COVID-19, influenza and a cold.⁷
- If you have any infection or respiratory symptoms, self-isolate.⁷
- Follow your state or territory guidelines about COVID-19 testing and contact your GP or pharmacist for further advice

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has stated that COVID-19 and flu vaccines can be given at the same time. Talk to your GP or pharmacist for more information about this.⁸

References: 1. Department of Health, Australia. Available at <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/flu-influenza> Last accessed February 2022. 2. CDC. Vaccination Information Statement. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/VACCINES/HCP/VIS/VIS-STATEMENTS/FLU.PDF> Last accessed February 2022. 3. Australian Influenza Surveillance Report. National 2020 Influenza Season Summary. Available at: <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-surveil-ozflu-flucurr.htm?File/National-Influenza-Season-Summary2020.pdf>. Accessed February 2022. 4. Mills, James & Yapp, Tim & CSIRO. Institute of Industrial Technologies. An economic evaluation of three CSIRO manufacturing research projects. CSIRO Institute of Industrial Technologies, Dickson, A.C.T 1996. 5. WHO. Influenza (seasonal). Available at [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-\(seasonal\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-(seasonal)). Last accessed February 2022. 6. CDC. Influenza (Cold versus Flu). Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/coldflu.htm#:~:text=Because%20these%20two%20types%20of,a%20runny%20or%20stuffy%20nose>. Last accessed February 2022. 7. Australian government. COVID-19: Identifying the symptoms. Available at: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/09/coronavirus-covid-19-identifying-the-symptoms_0.pdf. Accessed February 2022. 8. Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). Statement On The Administration Of Seasonal Influenza Vaccines In 2021 - Updated December 2021. Available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/12/atagi-advice-on-seasonal-influenza-vaccines-in-2021-december-2021-update.pdf> [Accessed February 2022]. 9. Populations at risk for severe or complicated influenza illness. Available at <https://www.bmj.com/content/347/bmj.f5061> Last accessed February 2022. 10. Health NSW Government. Medically at-risk and influenza. Available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Influenza/Pages/at-risk.aspx>. Accessed February 2022. 11. ISG. How Influenza is Spread? Available at <http://www.isg.org.au/index.php/about-influenza/howinfluenza-is-spread/> Accessed February 2022. 12. CDC. How flu spreads. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm#:~:text=When%20Flu%20spreads,7%20days%20after%20becoming%20sick>. Accessed February 2022. 13. WHO. Five simple steps to protect against flu. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/five-simple-steps-to-protect-against-flu>. Accessed February 2022. 14. The Australian Immunisation Handbook, 2020. Available at <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventablediseases/influenza-flu>. Accessed February 2022. 15. 2020 National Immunisation Program Influenza Vaccines. Clinical advice for vaccination providers. Available at: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/2020-national-immunisation-program-influenza-vaccines-clinical-advice-for-vaccination-providers_0.pdf. Accessed February 2022. Seqirus (Australia) Pty Ltd Melbourne, Victoria. ABN: 66 120 398 067. Seqirus™ is a trademark of Seqirus UK Limited or its affiliates. Date of preparation: February 2022. ANZ-FLU-22-0009. 001162.

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WILL YOU BE READY FOR FLU SEASON IN 2022?

Don't let the virus catch you off guard



Talk to your GP or pharmacist about flu vaccines and how you can protect yourself against the flu

flu.com.au



WHO IS AT RISK FROM FLU?

Certain groups are more at risk of flu and its complications, including older people.¹

PEOPLE WITH A COMORBIDITY may have up to

2.5x

increased risk of DEATH FROM FLU⁹



It doesn't matter how fit and healthy you are, or your age – you're still at risk of catching flu^{1,2}

WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM FLU^{1,13}

- Vaccination
- Maintain distance or avoid work and activities with symptomatic individuals and households
- If you don't feel well, stay at home
- Wash your hands regularly

VACCINATION IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO PROTECT AGAINST INFLUENZA¹

The influenza vaccine helps train your immune system to make antibodies to fight the influenza virus. By activating your natural defences, it gives you a head-start when your body is exposed to real influenza virus. Remember, it takes 2–3 weeks to build immunity.

Some people may be eligible for flu vaccines funded under the National Immunisation Program.¹⁴

Annual flu vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over¹⁵

ANYONE CAN CATCH THE FLU¹

The influenza virus can hit unexpectedly – no matter how fit and healthy you are. Influenza can be serious, sometimes causing complications or occasionally even causing death.²

FLU IS HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS¹

Flu infection happens when you breathe in droplets from sneezes and coughs of an infected person, or touch a contaminated surface then touch your mouth, eyes or nose.¹



1 to 2 metres

A sneeze can travel **1-2 metres** and a single sneeze droplet may contain **200,000,000** individual flu virus particles.¹⁰

The flu virus can survive in the environment up to **8 hours or more**.¹¹



UP TO 5 MINS
on hands
after transfer from other surfaces



UP TO 1 HOUR
in the air
in enclosed environments



8+ HOURS
hard surfaces
such as stainless steel and plastic

Flu can spread before any symptoms show.

You can pass it on to family or workmates before you know you're sick.¹²

You can be infectious to others for over a week¹²



before symptoms develop

and



after becoming sick

