

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends influenza vaccine for the following:

1) People at high risk of influenza related complications including adults and children with

- cardiac or pulmonary disorders including asthma
- diabetes mellitus & other metabolic diseases
- cancer, immunodeficiency, immunosuppression (due to underlying disease and/or therapy)
- renal disease
- anemia or hemoglobinopathy
- conditions that compromise the management of respiratory secretions
- children & adolescents with conditions treated for long periods with acetylsalicylic acid
- all residents of nursing homes & other chronic care facilities
- adults aged 65 years or older
- children aged 6-23 months
- pregnant women

2) People capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk of complications including

- health care & other care providers who could transmit to those at high risk
- household contacts of those at high risk
- household contacts of infants <6 months
- members of a household expecting a newborn during influenza season
- women at all stages of pregnancy or breastfeeding mothers
- those providing regular child care to children 0-23 months
- those who provide services within closed settings to persons at high risk

3) Others

- people who provide essential community services
- people in direct contact with avian influenza infected poultry during culling
- healthy people aged 2-64 years should be encouraged to receive the vaccine even if they are not in the above groups

Contraindications and Precautions

Do NOT give the influenza vaccine to:

- People who have had an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose
- People with hypersensitivity to eggs manifested as hives, swelling of the mouth & throat, difficulty breathing, hypotension or shock

Dosage Schedule

Age	Dose (ml)	No. of doses
6–35 months	0.25	1 or 2*
3–8 years	0.50	1 or 2*
9 years or older	0.50	1

* Previously unvaccinated children <9 years of age require 2 doses with an interval of 4 weeks. See NACI Statement.

Adverse Reactions

- Soreness or redness at the injection site lasting 1-2 days is common but rarely interferes with daily living.
- Prophylactic acetaminophen may minimize pain at injection site.
- Very rarely moderate to severe reactions may occur & should be reported to the provider.

Counselling Points

- 4000-8000 Canadians die from influenza-related complications each year
- Influenza typically lasts for 7-10 days, but the cough & weakness may continue for up to 6 weeks
- The vaccine provides protection up to 12 months, immunization is required each year
- October to mid-November is the best time for immunization, but may still be given in the winter months
- Other measures to prevent the spread of influenza:
 - Cover your mouth & nose with tissues or clothing when sneezing or coughing
 - Wash hands often with soap & water or alcohol-based hand rub
 - Stay home when you have a fever

Reference

National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)
Statement on Influenza Vaccination for the 2008-2009 Season
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni/

More Information

The Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion
www.influenza.cpha.ca

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