

# Influenza Prevention in People With Asthma

Influenza (“flu”) is a highly contagious respiratory infection that affects the lungs and airways.

Adults and children with asthma are at higher risk of severe influenza infection. Severe infection can lead to worsening asthma symptoms, pneumonia (lung infection), and hospitalization.

## Influenza immunization is recommended for people with:

- non-severe asthma,
- active wheezing,
- medically attended wheezing, and
- severe asthma (defined as currently taking oral or high-dose inhaled corticosteroids)



It is recommended that all individuals at risk of spreading influenza to people living with asthma receive the influenza vaccine. This includes household contacts, health care providers, and those who provide essential community services.

Most people with asthma are eligible to receive any available influenza vaccines in Canada. However, you should not receive the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) if you have severe asthma or if you have experienced medically attended wheezing within 7 days before your set immunization appointment.

LAIV uses an attenuated (weakened) form of the live influenza virus and is given as a nasal spray. Please note that LAIV may not be available in all provinces and territories.



## New strains of influenza appear every year.

Getting your annual influenza vaccine (flu shot) is safe and the most effective way to help prevent influenza infection.

Talk to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or local public health office about getting immunized against influenza.



### Reference:

National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). (2024.) Statement on seasonal influenza vaccine for 2024-2025.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/vaccines-immunization/national-advisory-committee-immunization-statement-seasonal-influenza-vaccine-2024-2025.html>