

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & PREVENTION



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الصحة ووقاية المجتمع

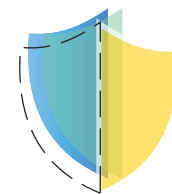


حصن نفسك احم

Protect yourself مجتمعاك
protect your community

Seasonal Influenza Awareness Guide 2023 - 2022





What is seasonal influenza?

Seasonal influenza is an acute respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses which circulate worldwide in certain seasons. It infects the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs.

What is the pathogen?

Influenza viruses belong to the (Orthomyxoviridae) family. They are classified into types A, B, C and D on the basis of their core proteins.

Signs and Symptoms:

Signs and symptoms range from mild to severe. Symptoms usually subside within a week, without any medical intervention. and , it may cause severe illness that requires hospitalization and may lead to serious complications, particularly among certain high-risk groups.



Sudden onset of fever



Headache



Malaise



Cough



Muscle and joint ache



Sore throat and a runny nose.



Younger children may experience vomiting and diarrhea.

Who is at a high-risk of getting influenza and its complication?



Pregnant women, at any stage of pregnancy.



Individuals with chronic medical conditions such as chronic cardiac, pulmonary, renal, neurodevelopmental, liver or hematologic diseases



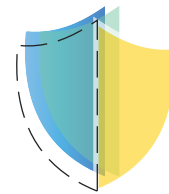
Children below 5 years of age



Elderly.



Health-care workers



Incubation period:

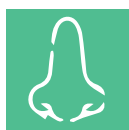
The time from contracting the infection to illness, is about 2 days, but may range from one to four days.

Modes of transmission:

Seasonal influenza spreads easily, especially in crowded areas through:

1. Direct mode of transmission: Droplets that are dispersed through coughing, sneezing & talking of an infected person.
2. Indirect mode of transmission: Touching contaminated hands or objects and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Complications of Seasonal Influenza:



Sinus infections



Bacterial pneumonia



Worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes.



Ear infections

How to diagnose Seasonal Influenza?

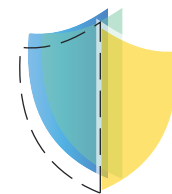
There are many respiratory viruses that can present as Influenza-like Illness e.g. rhinovirus, respiratory syncytial virus, parainfluenza and adenovirus.

Collection of appropriate respiratory samples and a laboratory investigation will confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment of Seasonal Influenza:

1. Patients that are not from the high-risk group can manage with symptomatic treatment to relieve fever and pain and other symptoms and are advised, to stay home in order to minimize transmission to others.

2. High-risk patients might need a different plan of treatment depending on the physician's evaluation.



How to prevent Seasonal Influenza?



Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent the disease.



Good respiratory hygiene: applying cough and sneezing etiquette.

Those feeling unwell (feverish or showing other symptoms of influenza) should self-isolate early on to prevent infecting others.



Regular hand-washing and sanitizing.



Avoiding close contact with sick people.



Avoiding touching eyes, nose or mouth.

Clean and sterilize frequently used surfaces and tools.

What is the influenza vaccine?

The “flu shot” is an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given usually in the arm.

Who can get the vaccine?

All individuals from age 6 months and above

Important groups that should take the flu vaccination:

It is highly recommended for the following groups to take the influenza vaccination, as they are more likely to contract the disease and its complications:



Elderly aged



Lungs diseases such as asthma



Health care providers



Diabetes



Pilgrims



Children from 6 months to 5 years



Heart disease



Those with chronic medical conditions:



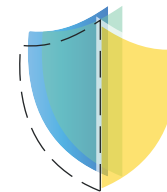
Pregnant women



Chronic kidney disease



Chronic liver disease



How do flu vaccines work?

Flu vaccines cause your body to develop antibodies against influenza illness and it is designed to protect against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season.

Who Should Not Be Vaccinated?



People who have an allergy to the vaccine or its components.

Suffering of severe or moderate symptoms of illness, with or without fever, where it is preferable to postpone the vaccination.



Children younger than 6 months old.

When should you get vaccinated?

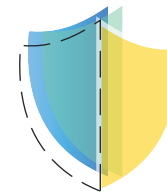
Ideally the best time to get the influenza vaccine is annually in (autumn) September or early (winter) before the influenza season starts. However, even if you did not get vaccinated at that time, vaccination is still recommended later as influenza may peak in later months during the year.

When does the flu vaccine become effective?

Two weeks after vaccination. That's why it's best to get vaccinated before influenza viruses start to spread in the community.

How effective is the flu vaccine?

- Influenza vaccines offer approximately 70-90% protection against clinical disease.
- Flu vaccines help protect against the main types of flu viruses, although there's still a chance you might get flu, but it's likely to last for a shorter duration and be milder.
- Taking a flu vaccine may help you prevent spreading the flu to other people who could be more at risk of serious problems from flu.
- In elderly people, vaccination may reduce the number of hospitalizations by 25-39% and has also been shown to reduce overall mortality by 39-75%.
- It can take 10 to 14 days for the flu vaccine to work.



Is the influenza vaccine safe?

Flu vaccines have a good safety record and have been used on millions of people for more than 60 years. Side effects of the flu vaccine are generally mild and go away on their own within a few days.

Can I get Influenza from the vaccine?

No, you cannot because the vaccination contains an inactive (non-contagious) virus.

Some people may develop flu-like symptoms such as a mild fever and muscle aches after receiving the vaccination. These symptoms are considered minor side effects and are not indicative of influenza.

What side effects can I get after vaccination?



Redness, swelling at the site of injection



Headache



Muscle aches



Allergic reaction to a component of the vaccine



Fever



Nausea

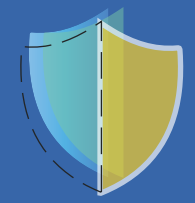
These side effects are usually mild and short-lasting, especially when compared to symptoms of the flu.

Why do we need to take the vaccine annually?

1. Flu viruses undergo frequent changes in their surface antigens. As a result, the composition of the vaccine is reviewed annually, and vaccines are updated to protect against the viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming flu season.
2. A person's immune protection from vaccination declines over time, so you need to take the vaccine annually for optimal protection.

Where to get the flu vaccine?

Flu vaccines are offered in all health care centers



Facts about seasonal influenza

Worldwide, annually epidemics result in about:

- 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness
- 290,000 to 650,000 respiratory deaths



Seasonal Influenza occurs all over the world, with an annual global attack rate of:



5-10% in adults



20-30% in children

Although patients will mostly recover without complications. However, it can be associated with serious illnesses, hospitalizations, and serious complications specially in high-risk groups.

It results in high levels of work/school absenteeism and loss of productivity.



Among elderly people, vaccination may reduce the number of

hospitalizations by 25-39%

and has also been shown to:

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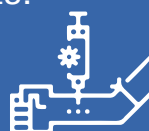


Children aged 5-9 years typically manifest the highest rates of infection.



Every flu season is different, and influenza can affect people differently.

Influenza vaccines offer approximately 70-90% protection against clinical disease in healthy adults.



Flu vaccination has been shown in several studies to reduce severity of illness.



Benefits of the influenza vaccination:

Decreases the risk of flu-associated hospitalization.

Prevents you from falling sick with influenza.

Reduces the severity of illness in people who are vaccinated but still get sick.

Protects pregnant women from acquiring the illness during and after pregnancy and helps protect infants in their first few months of life.

If you get the vaccine you are protecting your community & beloved ones from contracting the disease, especially if they are from high-risk groups.

Protects you from complications of influenza if you are suffering from certain chronic health conditions.



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