

Can children have the flu vaccine if they are allergic to eggs?

Yes. It is safe for children with egg allergy to have flu vaccine even if the allergy is severe. They do not have to be vaccinated in a hospital.

Talk to your doctor or immunisation provider about any allergies that your child has before they have the flu vaccine.

Is the flu vaccine free for my child?

The flu vaccine is **free** and recommended for:

- > all Aboriginal children from six months of age
- > children from six months of age with a medical condition that puts them at a higher risk of complications from the flu
- > all other children from six months to less than five years of age.

Flu vaccine is also recommended, but is not free, for any children not listed above. Please speak to your immunisation provider for advice.

Where can I get the flu vaccine for my child?

Go to your doctor or immunisation clinic.

There may still be a consultation fee from your doctor even if your child is able to have a free vaccine.



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FLU VACCINE FOR CHILDREN

what you need to know



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What is the flu?

Influenza or 'flu' is a highly contagious infection caused by the influenza virus. It can cause fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches and tiredness. Some children may get a very high fever without any other symptoms, and may need to go to hospital for treatment.

The flu can cause serious illness and complications in all young children and can be worse when children also have medical conditions such as diabetes, breathing or heart problems. Complications of the flu may be severe and include bronchitis, pneumonia and painful ear infections.

Flu infection can cause hospital stays and even death.

How can my child catch the flu?

Your child can catch flu when someone nearby who has the flu sneezes, coughs or speaks, or from contact with contaminated hands, tissues and other infected items. People may spread the virus before they know they are infected and children with flu may spread the virus for up to two weeks.

How to protect your child from the flu

1. Have your child immunised each year. This will help protect them from the flu and reduce the chance of you or other family members also becoming unwell.
2. Teach your child to wash their hands often, especially when coughing or sneezing.
3. Teach your child to cover their mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or to cough into their elbow.

The flu vaccine

The flu vaccine helps your child develop immunity without getting the flu.

The vaccine contains several inactivated flu strains to protect against the most commonly circulating flu viruses each year. As the flu virus changes often, the vaccine should be given each year for the best protection.

In the first year of having flu vaccine, children less than nine years of age should have two doses of the vaccine at least one month apart. Only one annual dose is required after the first year.

Is the flu vaccine safe for children?

Yes. The flu vaccine is safe and has been given to children in Australia for many years. As with all vaccines, your child may experience minor, short lasting side effects.

Generally, common reactions such as fever, headache, muscle aches and soreness at the injection site begin within a few hours and last 1-2 days.

If you are concerned or if the reaction seems severe, speak to your doctor or contact the Immunisation Section, SA Health, Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm on 1300 232 272.

Your child cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine because it does not contain any live flu virus.

