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Information for Consumers on Influenza Vaccination

Immunisation

Immunisation uses the body's natural defense mechanism to build resistance to infection. Influenza vaccine contains inactive particles that stimulate the immune system.

Safety of the vaccine

Influenza vaccine meets Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration requirements.

Time taken for vaccination to be effective

The body creates antibodies between 3 and 14 days after the vaccination.

Time between influenza vaccinations

Protection remains for about one year. Often there are different strains each year so annual vaccinations are necessary for continued protection.

Adverse effects of influenza vaccine

The vaccination site may become red or sore. There may also be itching, bruising or mild swelling. All these signs usually clear in 1-2 days. The lymph gland under the arm may swell which can last for several days.

Some people experience a mild fever, muscle aches or headache, all of which usually resolve within 2 days. If you have concerns, please contact your general practitioner.

Other more serious adverse effects

Some people experience fainting. If you have had Guillian-Barré syndrome there may be some neurological symptoms. If either of these has been a problem in the past, please inform your pharmacist. Very few people have had an anaphylactic reaction after vaccination.

Consumers who should **NOT** have influenza vaccine

If there is:

- A known allergic reaction to a vaccine in the past

After Care

It is recommended that the consumer stay close by for 15 minutes to ensure safety.

Can I receive free influenza vaccine under the National Immunisation Program?

You cannot receive a free vaccine from a community pharmacy, however a free vaccine is available from your GP (though a consultation fee may apply) for the following people who are at high risk of severe flu or complications from flu:

- People aged 65 years and over
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 15 years of age
- Pregnant Women
- People with one or more of the following conditions:
 - > heart disease; severe asthma; chronic lung condition; chronic illness requiring medical follow-up or hospitalisation in the past year; diseases of the nervous system; impaired immunity; or diabetes.

Questions

If there are any questions please ask your pharmacist.



The Pharmacy
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