

# Influenza Vaccine: What You Need to Know



Influenza, also known as the flu, is a respiratory illness that infects the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs. The flu vaccine protects against the four most common flu viruses. In recent years, the flu vaccine reduced the risk of illness by 40% and 60%. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all people six months and older get a flu vaccine every year.

**There are several different options for flu vaccines. The CDC recommends adults receive ONE of the following options for annual flu vaccination:**

- **High-dose** quadrivalent vaccine - *Only approved for people 65 and older*
- **Standard-dose** quadrivalent flu vaccine
- **Egg-free** quadrivalent flu vaccine

## Why It Matters

Influenza may lead to hospitalization or death. Older adults and people living with certain chronic conditions are at greater risk of developing serious complications from the flu. The CDC estimates that 70% to 85% of seasonal influenza deaths and 50% to 70% of seasonal influenza-related hospitalizations occur in those aged 65 and older.

## What You Can Do

The best way to prevent influenza, serious illness and hospitalization is to receive an annual flu vaccination.

**High-dose flu vaccines are now recommended for adults 65 and older.**

Flu vaccines are available at your local pharmacy or doctor's office.

Talk to your primary care provider to decide which vaccine is right for you.

Also, consider sharing information about the importance of getting the flu vaccine with your friends, family members and others in your network who are at increased risk (pregnant women, infants, and young children).



## Additional Resources:

<https://qi.ipro.org/home/its-worth-a-shot>

<https://qi-library.ipro.org>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/65over.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/flushot.htm>

<https://www.immunize.org/influenza>



■ **Healthcentric  
Advisors**  
■ **Qlarant**

**QIN-QIO**  
Quality Innovation Network -  
Quality Improvement Organizations  
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES  
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP

This material was prepared by the IPRO QIN-QIO, a Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of CMS or HHS, and any reference to a specific product or entity herein does not constitute endorsement of that product or entity by CMS or HHS. Publication # 12SOW-IPRO-QIN-TA-AA -23-1121 v.1 7/18/2023 -vb