



TOGETHER
WE CAN BEAT
THE FLU

GET
VACCINATED

Those who are most at risk of flu should do all they can to prevent and avoid flu. If they are unfortunate enough to contract flu, they should seek urgent medical attention.

Flu (or influenza) is caused by the influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, sinuses, upper airways, and may affect the lungs. It is mostly a mild disease in healthy children, young adults and middle-aged people. **Flu can, however, be life threatening in older people, toddlers and in people of any age who have chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart, lung or kidney disease or a compromised immune system.**

What are the benefits of the flu vaccination?

- Reduces the risk of transmitting flu to family members, co-workers or friends
- Prevents flu-associated absenteeism from work or school
- Prevents flu-associated illness and hospitalisation
- Can potentially save the lives of people at high risk

Who should be vaccinated?

- Pregnant and post-partum women (any time during pregnancy)
- HIV-infected people
- Healthcare workers
- People with chronic diseases (diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, kidney disease, etc.)
- Persons aged 50 years and older
- Residents of old-age homes and chronic care and rehabilitation institutions
- Children over six months old on long-term aspirin therapy
- Adults and children in close contact with individuals at risk of severe flu



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Who should not be vaccinated?

- Anyone who has had a severe reaction to the flu vaccine or any component of the vaccine
- Anyone who is allergic to chicken and eggs
- Children younger than six months of age
- Anyone suffering from Guillain-Barre syndrome (loss of sensation and paralysis starting from the feet)

What is the best time to get vaccinated?

The best time to get your flu vaccine is before the flu season starts, i.e. March to June, but getting it later will protect you during the remainder of the flu season.

COVID vaccine versus flu vaccine

The flu vaccine protects against infection from influenza viruses, while COVID-19 vaccines protect against SARS-CoV-2. The COVID vaccine has not replaced the flu vaccine. It is therefore important to take the flu vaccine to protect oneself from influenza.

Lifestyle tips for avoiding flu

It's also important to take several measures to reduce the spread of infection, including the following:

- **Wash your hands.** Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is an effective way to prevent

many common infections. Alternatively, use alcohol-based hand sanitisers if soap and water aren't available.

- **Avoid touching your face.** Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes.** Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Then wash your hands.
- **Clean surfaces.** Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces to prevent the spread of infection from touching a surface with the virus on it and then your face.
- **Avoid crowds.** The flu spreads easily wherever people gather — in childcare centres, schools, office buildings, auditoriums and on public transportation. By avoiding crowds during peak flu season, you reduce your chances of infection. Also avoid anyone who is sick. And if you're sick, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone so that you lessen your chance of infecting others.

Fund benefits for vaccinations

The Fund covers one flu vaccine per beneficiary per year from insured benefits. The Fund will pay for the cost of the vaccine at the Transmed rate, subject to the vaccine formulary. The Transmed pharmacy network is the designated service provider for flu vaccines. Link plan members must please contact Universal on 0861 686 278 for designated service provider information.

Visit www.transmed.co.za to find a network pharmacy.



The flu vaccine can **reduce your risk** of the flu and its severity and lower the risk of serious illness from the flu.