

# EPIDEMIOLOGICAL BULLETIN

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## 2022-2023 influenza (flu) Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions

**What is Flu?** Influenza (flu) is a respiratory viral disease (not a stomach or intestinal disease).

It causes hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and tens of thousands of deaths.

**How is Flu spread?** Influenza virus spreads through respiratory droplets. By inhalation or touching a surface contaminated with infected droplets.

INCUBATION period is 18 - 72 hours.

Infected person can spread the virus to others from 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick.

**When is the best time to get the vaccine?** Vaccinate in early September as flu may start earlier than winter. Vaccination can still be beneficial as long as flu viruses are circulating.

**Which type of vaccine are we using this influenza season 2022-2023?**

**Quadrivalent formulation** of egg-based influenza vaccines contain the following:

A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;

A/Darwin/9/2021 (H3N2)-like virus (updated);

B/Austria/1359417/2021-like virus (B/Victoria lineage) (updated);

B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata lineage)

**How is it given?**

All aged 6 months and older eligible to get a flu vaccine every year. One dose (0.5ml adults) of flu vaccine IM is recommended each season.

A clear colorless liquid suspension in prefilled single-dose syringes. The vaccine should be allowed to reach room temperature before use.

**Does the flu vaccine work?**

Yes. Flu vaccination reduces the risk of flu illness by between 40% and 60% it also prevents severe illness and complications. Flu vaccination was associated with a 26% lower risk of ICU admission and a 31% lower risk of death as well as reduced risk of hospitalization by 60%.

**Why does response vary?**

The protection provided by a flu vaccine varies from season to season.

Depends on how well the vaccines "match" the flu viruses spreading in the community, depends in part on the age and health status of the person getting the vaccine and on the type of flu vaccine used.

**What about people who get a seasonal flu vaccine and still get sick with flu symptoms?**

Exposed before vaccine

Different Strain not covered by vaccine

Other Viruses

**Is the Flu vaccine safe?**

Yes. Hundreds of millions of people have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines.

Adverse reactions are usually mild and self-limiting, most resolving in 2 days or less.

**Never underestimate the flu**

**لا تستهين أبداً بخطورة الإنفلونزا**

**This year it's more important than ever to get the free flu vaccine**

**الحصول على لقاح الإنفلونزا المجاني أكثر أهمية هذا العام من أي وقت مضى.**

**People at high risk:**

**الفئات الأكثر عرضة لخطر الإصابة بالإنفلونزا:**

- Healthcare workers
- Over 50 years old
- Children aged 6 months to five years old
- Pregnant women
- People with a chronic condition or immunodeficiency

**العاملون في مجال الرعاية الصحية**

**الأشخاص فوق عمر ٥٠ عاماً**

**الأطفال من عمر ٦ شهور حتى ٥ أعوام**

**النساء الحوامل**

**الأشخاص المصابون بأمراض مزمنة أو الذين يتلقون العلاج بأدوية تثبيط المناعة**

**Get your free flu vaccination; protect yourself, your patients and your family**

**بادر بالحصول على التطعيم المجاني ضد الإنفلونزا لحماية صحتك وصحة مرضاك وأفراد أسرتك.**

Scan the QR code for more information

لمزيد من المعلومات، يرجى مسح الرمز الظاهراً أمامكم.

**What are the side effects?(Flu vaccines cannot cause flu illness)**

Soreness, redness, tenderness or swelling where the shot was given, low-grade fever, headache, muscle aches.

**What is severe allergy?**

Difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, swelling around the eyes or lips, hives, a fast heartbeat

People who have previously had a severe allergic reaction to influenza vaccine or any of its ingredients should not be vaccinated.

**Can I get the flu shot if I am allergic to eggs?**

Yes. It's still recommended that you get the flu shot if you have an egg allergy, but you should receive the shot under medical supervision at a hospital. Egg protein is used to allow the virus to grow and replicate before it is harvested.

### Can I get the flu shot if I am Pregnant?

Yes. Inactivated influenza vaccines can be used in all stages of pregnancy. There are no adverse fetal and maternal outcomes attributable to the vaccine.

Vaccination reduces the risk of flu-associated acute respiratory infection in pregnancy.

Flu vaccine given during pregnancy helps protect the baby from flu for several months after birth.

Inactivated influenza vaccine can be used during breastfeeding.

Pregnant women or people with pre-existing medical conditions do not need special consent or permission for the vaccine.

### Whom should we prioritize?

- Persons aged ≥50 years,
- Adults and children with chronic disorders of the lungs or heart including asthma.
- Adults and children with chronic metabolic diseases such as diabetes mellitus.
- Adults and children with chronic renal dysfunction.
- Adults and children with immunodeficiencies including steroids or radiotherapy.
- Health care workers in contact with patients

### Does the flu shot increase the risk of getting COVID-19?

- No. Flu vaccines are not thought to make people more susceptible to other respiratory infections
- There is no evidence that getting a flu vaccination increases your risk of getting sick from a coronavirus
- Covid vaccine does not protect against Flu

### Can you combine Flu vaccine with other vaccines?

- Yes. Inactivated influenza vaccine (surface antigen) may be given at the same time as other vaccines.
- Covid vaccine/Booster can be given with Flu vaccine
- Immunization should be carried out on separate limbs.

### What else can we do to prevent Flu?

- Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you
- Covering coughs, washing hands regularly
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick or has symptoms
- Wear a mask in public spaces, avoid public transportation when sick
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches, electronics, and counters.

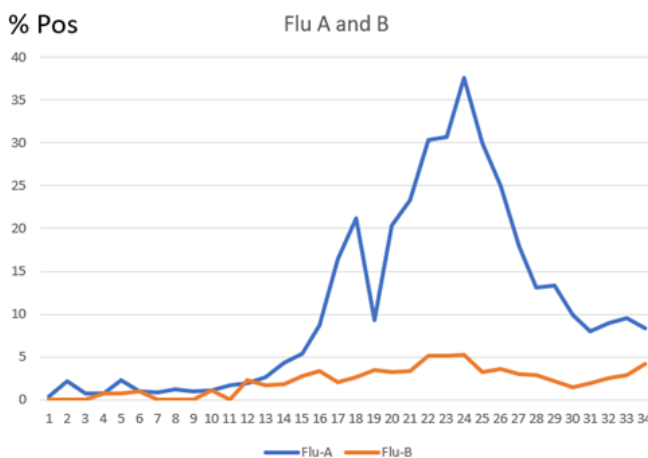
IT'S VACCINATION TIME!



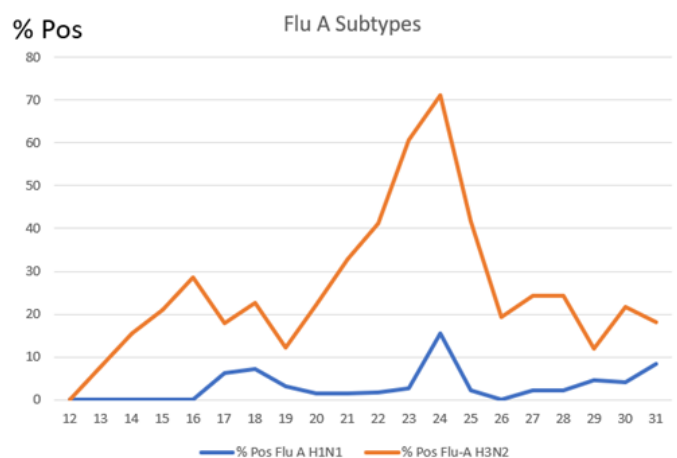
**HMC data** provided through the courtesy of Dr. Coyle, virology Lab

## State-of-Qatar - Influenza 2022

### Influenza A and B Week 1 - 34



### Influenza A Subtypes Week 12 - 31



Week 35 = 28Aug22 – 3Sep22