

Student Health

Influenza Vaccine FAQs

Who should get the flu vaccine? The influenza vaccine is recommended for everyone over the age of 6 months. The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent getting the flu. We recommend getting the flu shot as soon as it's available, usually in September or October.

Who shouldn't get the "regular" flu vaccine?

- Patients with a history of significant egg allergy (anaphylaxis) are now allowed to take the regular vaccine—in the past, egg allergy meant that patients could NOT take the regular vaccine, so many people are accustomed to the egg-free vaccine. Because of the new recommendations, egg-free vaccines are no longer available in Student Health, but may be available at home physician or local retail clinic offices.
- Those who have had a significant allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to past flu shots should discuss vaccination individually with his/her healthcare provider at an appointment.
- Those with a history of Guillain-Barre should discuss vaccination individually with his/her healthcare provider.

Is the flu shot free for students? YES!! Free flu shots will be available on a walk-in basis at Student Health, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. when the vaccine is available mid to late September.

There will also be a fun-filled flu shot event called "Flulapalooza" for Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt University Medical Center faculty, staff, and students scheduled for Wednesday, September 27th from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. in a large tent behind Light Hall.

What is the high dose influenza vaccine?

- The "regular" dose of influenza vaccine has been shown to be less effective than "high dose" for those 65 and older. So the high dose vaccine is currently recommended for patients older than 65 and "regular" dose is recommended for those under age 65.
- Student Health can order high dose influenza vaccine for patients over age 65.

What other options are there? I'm afraid of needles! The FluMist nasal vaccine or the intradermal (smaller needle) vaccines may be available at home physician offices or local retail clinics. Student Health does not carry either of these vaccines.

I've had COVID, can I still get the flu vaccine? Yes, you should get the flu vaccine as long as you aren't currently ill with fever or other COVID symptoms.

I've recently had the COVID vaccine, can I still get the flu vaccine? Yes! There are no interactions between the COVID vaccines and the flu vaccines, and no delays are needed for flu vaccination if you recently had the COVID vaccine.