

VANDERBILT HEALTH

Student Health

Influenza Vaccine FAQs

Who should get the flu vaccine? The influenza vaccine is recommended for everyone over the age of 6 months every year. 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.

Do I need a flu shot every year? YES!. Flu shots are updated annually to target the most likely variant of the virus, so you need to get an updated flu shot every year to get the best protection from getting the Flu.

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 or other serious adverse reaction to the flu shot 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 Health faculty, staff, and students scheduled for Friday, September 25th from 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. in Langford Hall Lobby. Check our website for more information or for additional events if offered.

Flu shots are also usually free at commercial retail pharmacies, but you should check with the pharmacy before receiving the vaccine to be sure.

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. As a result, high dose vaccine is currently recommended for patients older than 65 and "regular" dose is recommended for those under age 65.
- "High Dose" influenza vaccine is also recommended for those who have had solid organ transplant.
- Student Health can order high dose influenza vaccine for patients over age 65 or those who have had solid organ transplant.

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 been sick recently; can I still get the flu vaccine? Yes, you should get the flu vaccine as long as you aren't currently ill with fever and feel well enough to be vaccinated.

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