



Influenza Vaccine - Live

Influenza (“flu”) is a very contagious disease.

It is caused by the influenza virus, which spreads from infected persons to the nose or throat of others.

Every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu;
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and;
- About 36,000 people die from flu.

Anyone can get influenza. For most people, it lasts only a few days. It can cause:

Fever	Chills	Fatigue	Headache	Muscle aches
Cough	Runny or stuffy nose	Sore throat		

Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, are more common in children

Some people get much sicker. Influenza can lead to pneumonia and dehydration which can be dangerous. It can cause high fever and seizures in children. Children may get sinus problems and ear infections.

How Flu Spreads

Flu viruses spread in respiratory droplets caused by coughing and sneezing. They usually spread from person to person, though sometimes people become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5 days **after** becoming sick. **That means that you can pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.**

Live, attenuated influenza vaccine (nasal spray).

Live, attenuated influenza vaccine (L.A.I.V.) was licensed in 2003. L.A.I.V. contains live but attenuated (weakened) influenza virus. It is sprayed into the nostrils rather than injected into the muscle. It is recommended for healthy children and adults from 5 through 49 years of age, who are not pregnant.

Influenza viruses are constantly changing. Therefore, influenza vaccines are updated every year, and an annual vaccination is recommended.

For most people influenza vaccine prevents serious illness caused by the influenza virus. It will not prevent “influenza-like” illnesses caused by other viruses.

It takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after the shot, and protection can last up to a year.

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Who can get L.A.I.V.?

- Live, intranasal influenza vaccine is approved for healthy children and adults from 5 through 49 years of age, including those who can spread influenza to people at high risk, such as:
- Household contacts and out-of-home caretakers of infants from 0 through 23 months of age.

Who should not get L.A.I.V.?

- Adults 50 years of age or older or children younger than 5.
- People who have long-term health problems with:
 - Heart disease - Kidney disease
 - Lung disease - Metabolic disease, such as diabetes
 - Asthma - Anemia and other blood disorders
- People with a weakened immune system.
- Children or adolescents on long-term aspirin treatment.
- Pregnant women.
- Anyone with a history of Guillain-Barré syndrome (a severe paralytic illness, also called G.B.S.).

Inactivated influenza vaccine (the flu shot) is the preferred vaccine for people (including health-care workers, and family members) coming in close contact with anyone who has a severely weakened immune system (that is, anyone who requires care in a protected environment).

Some people should talk to us before getting either influenza vaccine:

- Anyone who has ever had a serious allergic reaction to eggs or to a previous dose of influenza vaccine.
- People who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting flu vaccine.

Most people need one dose of influenza vaccine each year. Children younger than 9 years of age getting influenza vaccine for the first time should get 2 doses For L.A.I.V.; these doses should be given 6 to 10 weeks apart.

What are the risks from L.A.I.V.?

A vaccine, like any medicine, could possibly cause serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions. However, the risk of a vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.

Live influenza vaccine viruses rarely spread from person to person. Even if they do, they are not likely to cause illness.

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L.A.I.V. is made from weakened virus and does not cause influenza. The vaccine can cause mild symptoms in people who get it (see below).

Mild problems:

Some children and adolescents 5 through 21 years of age have reported mild reactions, including:

- Runny nose, nasal congestion or cough
- Headache and muscle aches
- Fever
- Abdominal pain or occasional vomiting or diarrhea
- Sore throat
- Cough, chills, tiredness/weakness

These symptoms did not last long and went away on their own. Although they can occur after vaccination, they may not have been caused by the vaccine.

Severe problems:

- Life-threatening allergic reactions from vaccines are very rare. If they do occur, it is within a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.
- If rare reactions occur with any new product, they may not be identified until thousands, or millions, of people have used it. Over two million doses of L.A.I.V. have been distributed since it was licensed, and no serious problems have been identified. Like all vaccines, L.A.I.V. will continue to be monitored for unusual or severe problems.

What if there is a severe reaction?

- Any unusual condition, such as a high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a serious allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

What should I do?

- Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, or health department to report the reaction by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. Or you can file this report through the VAERS web site at www.dot.v.a.e.r.s.dot.h.h.s.dot.g.o.v., or by calling 1-800-822-7967.

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