



## Influenzavaccine Information

Your workplace has chosen to offer you a vaccination against influenza. It is in everyone's interest that you and your colleagues stay healthy. Influenza is a recurring challenge for society as a whole. Influenza leads to many sick days. Vaccination is the only prevention against influenza, and it is easy and safe.

### What is flu?

Influenza virus is a highly contagious virus and cannot be treated with antibiotics, but is only prevented by vaccination.

There are three main types of influenza: Type A-B and C flu.

Type A is the most frequent, with the strongest symptoms, Type B Influenza is a little milder, and Type C influenza is the mildest.

Every 2-3 years we experience an influenza epidemic, where up to 1 million Danes get infected. A few of them, most often weakened and older die from the influenzainfection.

Influenza affects your respiratory tract (nose, throat and lungs). The most common symptoms of influenza disease are fever up to 38 – 40 degrees, chills, headache and muscle aches, sneezing and possibly pain on swallowing. For most people the flu lasts for about a week and can leave them feeling very tired for some time after. Occasionally complications develop in at-risk groups and some people are ill for longer, and need hospital care.

### Can anyone catch the flu?

Yes, no matter how fit and healthy the individual is, they can end up in bed with the flu.

### Can the flu jab cause the flu?

Absolutely not. The vaccine contains no live flu virus so it is impossible for it to give you the flu.

### Are there any side effects from having the jab?

Side effects are extremely uncommon. Some people may feel some slight soreness in their arm where they had the injection. Occasionally a slight temperature or headache 24 hours after the jab may be experienced.

### Can you avoid catching the flu?

The flu virus is very infectious, so if there is an outbreak, it can be hard to avoid unless you have natural immunity to it. The most effective way to avoid the flu is to get vaccinated, which offers around 70 to 90 per cent protection.

Also you can follow these steps to reduce the risk of Influenza contamination.

- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently
- Cough and sneeze in your sleeve
- Stay at home if you experience flu symptoms.
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Your workplace has chosen to offer you a free vaccination against influenza. It is entirely voluntary if you wish to be vaccinated.



## Frequently asked questions

### **How effective is the flu vaccine?**

Scientific studies show that influenza vaccination provides protection in younger healthy people of 67% – 92% against development of flu. The rest will get a mild disease if they get sick of flu..

### **How does the vaccine work?**

The vaccine contains inactivated virus that enables your immune system to make antibodies. These protect it against the strains of the virus predicted by the World Health Organization as the most likely to hit this flu season.

### **How long does the vaccine take to work?**

Protection develops about a week after receiving the vaccine.

### **Are there any side effects from having the jab?**

Side effects are extremely uncommon. Seasonal flu vaccination may cause local swelling, rash, itching and tenderness at the site of vaccination for 1-2 days after vaccination and a slight increase in temperature may occur in the first 24 hours. Serious vaccination reactions may occur, but these are extremely rare. The vast majority of the vaccinated have no side effects.

### **Does the vaccine protect against colds?**

No, the viruses that cause colds are different from the ones that cause flu. But the effects of flu at home and at work are far nastier than a cold, so it is good to be as protected as possible.

### **Does having the jab protect you for life?**

No. Unfortunately, the flu vaccine should be renewed every year as viruses are constantly changing. The vaccination must take place between early October and late November. Influenza epidemics occur in

Denmark usually in the period January-March, sometimes already in December.

### **Will having the jab hurt?**

Discomfort is minimal. The injection is given in the upper arm via a small needle and only takes a couple of seconds to administer. The jab is given by a highly qualified nurse and your staff member will be back at their desk within minutes.

### **Who should not be vaccinated?**

People with hypersensitivity to formaldehyd, gentamicin og neomycin must not be vaccinated.

People with hypersensitivity to chicken eggs must not be vaccinated as the vaccine may contain proteins from eggs. If a person can eat eggs, vaccination can be given properly.

if you are allergic to certain antibiotics (but allergy to penicillin or erythromycin is NOT a problem).

In case of febrile disease, vaccination should be postponed. If you have had severe reactions to Influenzavaccination in the past.

### **Pregnancy and lactation**

Pregnant women is recommended influenza vaccination by the health authorities.

Vaccination is given from the second trimester in pregnancy. Influenza vaccines can be given

during lactation.

### **Does the National Board of Health provide flu jabs?**

Yes, but only to specific groups such as the over 65s.

Healthy working adults only receive a flu vaccine if provided by their employer or if they choose to pay for it privately.

### **What is a flu epidemic?**

A flu epidemic is when a high proportion of people get influenza – often as a result of a significant change in the flu virus. Flu epidemics tend to happen every few years in Denmark.

### **What is a flu pandemic?**

A flu pandemic occurs when a major change to the flu virus emerges, for which worldwide, patients have little defense. During the 20th century there were three flu pandemics, including the Spanish flu which is estimated to have infected half the world population, killing some 30 million people.