

Ministry of Health

Health Care Provider Qs & As: Information for Individuals 6 months to 64 years of age

This Qs & As sheet is intended for informational purposes only. It is not intended to provide medical or legal advice.

1. What publicly funded influenza vaccines are available for individuals 6 months to 64 years of age for Ontario's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) during the 2019/2020 influenza season?

| | Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccine | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------|--|-----|--|---|
| UIIP Abbreviation | QIV | | | | | | |
| NACI Abbreviation | IIV4-SD | | | | | | |
| Vaccine product | FluLaval Tetra | Fluzone® Quadrivalent | Afluria® Tetra | | | | |
| Micrograms of HA | 15 µg | 15 µg | 15 µg | | | | |
| Dosage | 0.5 ml | 0.5 ml | 0.5 ml | | | | |
| Format | Multidose vial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidose vial (MDV) • Prefilled syringe (PFS) | Prefilled syringe | | | | |
| Route | Intramuscular injection | Intramuscular injection | Intramuscular injection | | | | |
| Age indication | ≥6 months | ≥6 months | ≥5 years | | | | |
| Most common allergens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* • Thimerosal | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>MDV</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* • Thimerosal </td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFS</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* </td> </tr> </table> | MDV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* • Thimerosal | PFS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* • Neomycin • Polymyxin B |
| MDV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* • Thimerosal | | | | | | |
| PFS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg protein* | | | | | | |

**The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) indicates that egg-allergic individuals may be vaccinated against influenza using the full dose of any appropriate product.*

HA refers to hemagglutinin

Important note:

- Fluzone® Quadrivalent and Fluzone® High-Dose are different products. Fluzone® High-dose is only authorized for those 65 years of age and older. Please use caution when administering Fluzone® products to ensure that the right vaccine is being administered to the right person.
- Afluria® Tetra is only authorized for children 5 years of age and over and should not be used in younger children.

2. How many doses of the influenza vaccine are needed to provide protection?

| Age | Number of doses recommended |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 6 months to under 9 years of age – Not previously immunized with influenza vaccine in their lifetime | 2 doses at least 4 weeks apart* |
| 6 months to under 9 years of age – Previously immunized with at least one dose influenza vaccine in their lifetime | 1 dose |
| 9 years of age and older | 1 dose |

**The same vaccine product does not need to be used for both doses.*

3. How many strains do the influenza vaccines available for individuals 6 month to 64 years of age protect against?

The QIV is a quadrivalent influenza vaccine, meaning it protects against four strains - two influenza A strains and two influenza B strains.

4. Who can administer the influenza vaccine?

- Regulated health professionals who are authorized to administer vaccines
 - Note: trained pharmacists may only administer publicly funded influenza vaccine to individuals 5 years of age and older.
- Appropriately trained individuals with necessary equipment operating under a medical directive from a regulated health professional who is authorized to administer vaccines.

5. Can the QIV vaccine cause influenza?

No, the QIV products are inactivated vaccines so individuals cannot get influenza from the vaccine.

6. Can the vaccine be given to individuals when they are ill?

Those with a severe acute illness with or without fever should usually wait until the symptoms subside before being immunized.

Individuals with a minor illness with or without fever (e.g., a cold) can still get the vaccine.

7. What are the common side effects from the vaccine?

- Redness, swelling, and soreness at the injection site
- Headache
- Tiredness/weakness
- Fever

These are generally mild and last only a few days.

8. Who should NOT get the influenza vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose or to any ingredient in the vaccine, with the exception of egg.
 - According to NACI, egg-allergic individuals may be vaccinated against influenza using the full dose of any appropriate product, including QIV.
- Anyone who has developed Guillan-Barré Syndrome (GBS) within six weeks of a previous influenza vaccination should generally not be vaccinated, however this should be weighed against the risks of not being protected against influenza.

9. What information should be provided to individuals related to potential adverse events following immunization (AEFI) with the influenza vaccine?

The influenza vaccine, like any medicine, can cause side effects, which in most cases are mild, lasting only a few days. Life-threatening allergic (anaphylactic) reactions are very rare. If they do occur, it is typically within a few minutes to a few hours after receiving the vaccine. Guillan-Barré Syndrome (GBS) or Oculorespiratory Syndrome (ORS) may occur in extremely rare instances. Please refer to question 17 of the the Health Care Provider Qs & As: Information for the 2019/2020 Influenza Season sheet for further details.

As per s.38 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, those administering vaccines should ensure that the vaccine recipients or their parents/guardians are advised to immediately call their doctor/nurse practitioner or go to the nearest hospital emergency department if they develop a reaction that could be related to the vaccine, particularly the following:

- Hives
- Swelling of the mouth and throat
- Trouble breathing, hoarseness or wheezing
- High fever (over 40°C or 104°F)
- Convulsions (seizures)
- Other serious reactions

Health care providers (e.g., physicians, nurses and pharmacists) are required by law (i.e., Health Protection and Promotion Act, s. 38) to report AEFIs. Reports should be made using the Ontario AEFI Reporting Form (available at: <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/vaccinesafety>) and sent to the local public health unit.

A list of public health units is available at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>.

10. Where can health care providers find more information about the UIIP?

Health care providers looking for more information about influenza, influenza vaccines, or the province's UIIP can refer to the Health Care Provider Qs & As: Information for the 2019/2020 Influenza Season sheet or to their local public health unit.

A list of public health units is available at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>.

11. Who should individuals talk to if they have questions about influenza or any other vaccines?

Individuals looking for general information about influenza, influenza vaccines or the province's UIIP can call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 toll free in Ontario (TTY#1-800-387-5559) or visit: ontario.ca/flu. Questions about the vaccine that are specific to an individual's medical condition should be discussed with a health care provider or local public health unit.

A list of public health units is available at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>.

For additional information on influenza or the vaccine, please visit the following websites or call your local public health unit:

- a) Universal Influenza Immunization Program: <http://www.ontario.ca/influenza>
- b) Public Health Agency of Canada - National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/vaccines-immunization/canadian-immunization-guide-statement-seasonal-influenza-vaccine-2019-2020.html>
- c) Public Health Ontario: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/influenza>
- d) Immunize Canada: <https://www.immunize.ca/>
- e) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - Seasonal Influenza: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/>
- f) ServiceOntario, INFOline: 1-866-532-3161 toll free in Ontario (TTY: 1-800-387-5559)
- g) For a list of public health unit locations, please visit: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>

Version française disponible en communiquant avec le 1 866 532-3161 ATS: 1 800 387-5559 (site web: www.health.gov.on.ca/fr/ccom/flu/)