



Joint  
Venture

with  
Southern Cross  
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# Flu FAQ's

## Why do I need the flu vaccine if I am healthy?

Anyone can catch the flu. Being fit and healthy does not protect you. Flu spreads very easily and up to 1 in 5 people still get the flu every year. There is also new evidence that people are more likely to have heart attacks after they have had the flu, even with no known heart condition.

By having the flu vaccination, you not only protect yourself and reduce the chance of bringing it home to someone who is pregnant, a baby, or an older relative, all who could become seriously ill from the Flu.

## Why do I need the flu vaccine every year?

The flu virus usually changes each year, so the World Health Organization meets each year and studies the different strains of the Flu around the world. They then develop vaccines to match the strains that are most likely to be circulating during our New Zealand winter season.

## Can the flu vaccine give you the flu?

It is not possible to get the flu from the flu vaccine, as the vaccine is made from parts of flu viruses, which are not live, and are not infectious.

Sometimes the expected side effects of the vaccine can be confused with the flu. These can include redness and soreness at the injection site, fever, tiredness and aching muscles. These side effects can start 6-12 hours after your vaccination and may last up to 2 days. The vaccine sometimes does not stop you from getting the flu but should stop you from getting really sick.

## Is the flu any worse than a cold?

The flu is a severe illness and can keep you in bed for a week at least, sometimes requiring treatment in hospital. A cold is mild and lasts a few days.

### Flu

- Severe illness lasting 7-10 days.
- Usually, a high fever
- Shivering attacks
- Muscular pains
- Headache (may be severe)
- Dry cough, may become moist
- Vomiting occasionally
- Bedridden
- Severe complications
- Hospitalisation

### Cold

- Symptoms last 1-2 days
- Sometimes a mild fever
- A runny nose
- No muscular pain
- Mild headache
- Sometimes a cough

## Can I have the flu vaccine at the same time as the Covid-19 vaccine?

You can't have the flu vaccine at the same time as the Covid-19 vaccine. You must have your flu vaccine 2 weeks before your first Covid-19 vaccine, or 2 weeks after your 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

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