

Clinical update: 2020 seasonal influenza vaccines – early advice for vaccination providers

Annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent influenza and its complications and is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over (unless contraindicated).

To meet the anticipated demand for seasonal influenza vaccines in 2020, the Australian Government will be securing the largest supply of seasonal influenza vaccines ever through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for people most at risk. **NIP vaccines will be available in April, subject to local supply arrangements.**

Updates for 2020

- All people aged 6 months to less than 5 years will now be eligible for free influenza vaccines under the NIP in 2020.
- This year Australia is the first country to offer an adjuvanted Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (QIV), Fludax[®] Quad, for people aged 65 years and over.
- New age-specific vaccines will be available under the NIP in 2020 for eligible people, and age indications for some vaccines have changed.
- Refer to the [Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation's Statement on the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2020](#) for up-to-date clinical advice on the age-specific QIVs available under the NIP, strains included in 2020 vaccines, timing of vaccination, and other relevant topics.

Eligibility for influenza vaccines through the National Immunisation Program

In 2020, influenza vaccines funded through the NIP are available to the following groups due to their increased risk of complications from influenza:

- All people aged 6 months to less than 5 years (this cohort is newly eligible in 2020)
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and over
- Pregnant women (during any stage of pregnancy)
- All people aged 65 years and over
- People aged six months and over with medical conditions which increase the risk of influenza disease complications.

Timing of vaccination

Optimal protection against influenza occurs within the first three to four months following vaccination. Timing of vaccination should aim to achieve the highest level of protection during peak influenza season. This usually occurs from June to September in most parts of Australia. Vaccinating from April provides protection before the peak season.

Further information and resources about 2020 seasonal influenza vaccines will be made available shortly.