

Protect yourself and others



Information about the flu vaccination

Why and for whom is the flu vaccination recommended?

The flu vaccination is the easiest and most effective way of protecting yourself and those around you from flu and its complications, which are occasionally severe. It is recommended for anyone with an increased risk of flu complications and their close work or social contacts.

You can find more information and the flu vaccination check at www.protectionagainstflu.ch.

Where and when can I get vaccinated?

You can get a flu vaccination from your doctor and at vaccination centres. In almost all cantons, healthy people aged 16 or over can also get a flu vaccination at a pharmacy (see www.impfapotheke.ch).

The flu vaccination period lasts from mid-October until the start of the flu wave. The flu wave in Switzerland usually starts between December and March. After vaccination, the body's immune system takes around two weeks to build up vaccination protection.

The flu vaccination must be repeated every year as flu viruses are constantly mutating and the vaccine therefore has to be adapted from one year to the next. A flu vaccination can be given at the same time as, before or after a COVID-19 vaccination.

How effective is the vaccination?

The flu vaccination is very safe and is usually well tolerated. The effectiveness of the flu vaccination varies widely depending on the influenza season and population group, ranging from 20% to 80%. The flu vaccination only provides protection against 'real' flu (influenza), but not against COVID-19 and all the coughs and colds that circulate in the winter months. The COVID-19 vaccination does not offer protection against flu.

What are the potential side effects?

After you have had a flu vaccination, you may experience soreness or redness at the injection site. You may also experience isolated symptoms, such as a high temperature, muscle pain or feeling slightly unwell. These are generally harmless and subside after a few days. In very rare cases, people may experience a rash, oedema, or in the case of an allergy, breathing difficulties or an immediate allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock). If you need advice, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

However, one thing is certain: the risk of developing severe flu complications is many times higher than the likelihood of experiencing severe side effects following vaccination.

When should caution be taken regarding vaccination?

Sick people or those with a fever should wait until their symptoms subside before getting vaccinated as otherwise their immune systems will not respond well to the vaccine. The flu vaccination is only contraindicated for people with severe allergies (anaphylaxis) to vaccine ingredients.

Who covers the costs?

The costs of the vaccination are covered by the compulsory health insurance for people with an increased risk of complications (including pregnant women), provided their deductible has already been used up.

For vaccination in a pharmacy, the costs of the vaccine are reimbursed if the vaccination is medically prescribed; the costs of administering the vaccination are always borne by the vaccinated person. Many businesses, in particular in the medical or paramedical sector, offer their staff a free vaccination.