

UIIP UPDATE #3

Flu Vaccine Orders

Interest and demand for flu vaccine has been early and high this year, and is unprecedented compared to previous flu seasons. Toronto Public Health would like to thank all of our health care partners who have been incredible at being available to provide flu vaccine during the pandemic.

Flu vaccine continues to be distributed. The province is working through the federal vaccine procurement process to acquire additional doses of vaccine. More information will be sent out as it become available.

Guidance on influenza vaccine reactions and COVID-19 symptoms

Many people who get their flu shot have no side effects. If side effects are present, they are usually mild and go away on their own in a few days without any treatment.

Vaccine side effects vs. COVID-19 symptoms

If a patient presents with fever, flu like symptoms, and/or malaise, within 72 hours post vaccination, and they are NOT a close contact of someone with COVID-19, then consider if the symptoms are related to the vaccine. For students or school staff, an "alternative medical diagnosis" can be provided so they can attend schools when symptoms are improving for 24 hours.

If uncertain, consider sending the patient for COVID-19 testing. It is important that the health care provider do the assessment. Complete an [adverse events following immunization \(AEFI\) report](#) if the [reaction is severe or unusual](#).

Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccines

The average time for side effects can vary between immediate to 3-7 days post vaccination.

<p>Common side effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o pain, redness & swelling at injection site o headache, fatigue, drowsiness o low-grade fever (usually in young children) o irritability, loss of appetite o joint pain, myalgia or muscle ache o shivering o nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain 	<p>Less common side effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o chills or fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ o malaise, myalgia o vomiting, diarrhea o influenza like illness o upper respiratory tract infection o cough o bruising/ pruritus/ rash at injection site
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High-dose Trivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine, for adults 65+

Side effects with high-dose vaccine may include more soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given, lasting a few days longer than the standard vaccine.

Common side effects	Uncommon side effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site ○ headache ○ muscle or joint pain ○ feeling tired or weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ bruising, rash or swelling at the injection site ○ cough, throat irritation ○ chills, fever $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ○ nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

Severe allergic reactions

On very rare occasions, severe allergic reactions can occur. Severe reactions can occur within 15 minutes to a few hours after receiving the vaccine. Encourage clients to watch for symptoms of hives, swelling, trouble breathing, fast heart rate, dizziness or weakness.

The risk of *Oculo-Respiratory Syndrome* or *Guillain-Barré Syndrome* after flu vaccination is very low, about one case in a million flu shots.