

Who should be vaccinated?

Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for any person (6 months+) who wishes to reduce the risk of becoming ill with influenza. People at an increased risk of influenza complications include:

- OLDER ADULTS (65+)
- INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS (15+)
- PREGNANT WOMEN
- Those with UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITIONS (such as heart conditions, asthma, diabetes, chronic neurological disease, renal and metabolic disease, and impaired immunity).



This group may qualify for FREE VACCINE under the Australian Government's National Immunisation Program.



Other factors that might put people at high risk of complications:

- OBESITY
- STROKE
- TOBACCO SMOKING
- RESIDENTS OF NURSING HOMES or other long-term facilities
- DOWN SYNDROME

What is influenza?

Commonly known as 'the flu', influenza is a HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS disease that can be serious, debilitating and affect the whole body.

Influenza can cause serious illness, particularly in people with underlying medical conditions, older adults, pregnant women and young children.

FLU SYMPTOMS include fever (often high), chills, severe cough, headaches, muscle aches and pains and sore throat. Children's symptoms may also include nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.



There are a number of things people can do to protect themselves against influenza:

- VACCINATION is the single most effective way to protect against influenza infection
- HAND WASHING and personal hygiene
- AVOIDING CROWDS during the flu season.



Influenza Specialist Group

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The Influenza Specialist Group (ISG) is a not for profit organisation, consisting of medical and scientific specialists from around Australia and New Zealand, with an expertise in influenza.

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Protecting Australians from influenza



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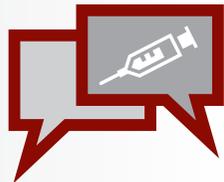
Who are we?

The Influenza Specialist Group (ISG) is a group of medical and scientific specialists dedicated to protecting Australians from the effects of influenza. The ISG is a not-for-profit organisation, created in response to the 1990 influenza vaccine shortages in Australia.



What do we do?

CREATE AWARENESS and PROVIDE INFORMATION



ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



Why is influenza important?



10-40% of children are likely to contract influenza in any given season, compared with 5-20% of adults.

Influenza in Australia results in more than

18,000 HOSPITALISATIONS ...



... and 300,000 GP CONSULTATIONS per year.

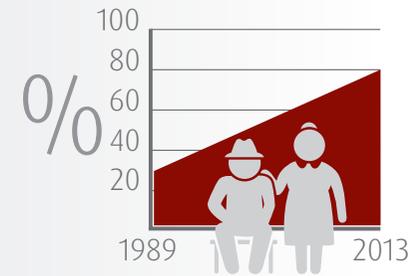


Influenza is a potentially fatal disease that is estimated to cause more deaths than accidents on roads:

1500-3500 INFLUENZA DEATHS ANNUALLY

What has been achieved?

Flu vaccination in the over 65s has INCREASED from around 30% to around 80% since 1989.



Vaccine use in Australia has INCREASED almost 10-fold since 1989.

Australia has now one of the better flu VACCINATION RATES in the world particularly among older adults (though many younger at risk people are still unvaccinated).



FREE

The ISG has been influential in the introduction of FREE VACCINE for over 65s, the over 50 indigenous population and for younger Australians who are 'at risk'.