

Influenza Vaccine Campaign 2021-2022: Bulletin #1

As we head into the fall respiratory season with COVID-19 endemic in our population, influenza vaccination continues to be critically important to prevent another respiratory illness that could result in unnecessary isolation or testing for COVID-19. In addition, influenza vaccination will help reduce the impact on the health care system. BC has purchased more vaccine than previous seasons. Like last year, we encourage you to work with your local Division of Family Practice to offer influenza immunization clinics to your patients.

Eligibility: Currently, there are no changes to eligibility criteria. Influenza vaccine is recommended for everybody, and provided free to individuals at high risk of influenza complications (children 6-59 months of age, people 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, people 5-64 years of age with underlying chronic health conditions), as well as those in contact with people at high risk including health care workers, visitors to health care facilities, and essential community service providers.

All publicly funded influenza vaccines available this season are quadrivalent:					
	General population			Special populations	
Product name	FluLaval® Tetra	Fluzone® Quadrivalent	Afluria® Tetra	Flumist® Quadrivalent ¹	Fluzone® High-Dose Quadrivalent
Intended age use ²	≥ 6 months	≥ 6 months	≥ 5 years	2-17 years	≥ 65 years ³
Format ⁴	MDV	MDV or PFS	MDV	PFS	PFS
Strains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus (NEW strain this year) • A/Cambodia/e0826360/2020 (H3N2)-like virus (NEW strain this year) • B/Washington/02/2019 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus; and • B/Phuket/3073/2013 (B/Yamagata lineage)-like virus 				

Notes:

¹Flumist™ is a live, attenuated vaccine, administered as intranasal spray; additional contraindications apply.

²Do not miss an immunization opportunity: if an intended product is not available, please use an appropriate alternate product.

³Fluzone HD™ is available for people ages ≥65 who are residents of Long Term Care or Assisted Living facilities or residents of First Nation communities. This vaccine will not be available for physician offices. Community dwelling seniors should be offered another influenza vaccine; alternatively, they can purchase Fluzone® HD at select pharmacies or VCH Travel Clinic.

⁴MDV = Multi-dose vial; PFS = Pre-filled single-dose syringes or sprayers.

Reminder: People with severe egg allergy (including anaphylaxis) can be offered any influenza vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccine and influenza: COVID-19 vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines, including influenza.

Vaccine ordering and distribution process: This year, you can expect to receive as much vaccine as you received last year, and likely more if needed. *If your office received influenza vaccine last year, you do not need to place an initial order.* However, offices that did not offer influenza vaccine last season and wish to do so this season are invited to call their local health unit to register and request vaccine for the campaign.

We expect to start receiving influenza vaccine by mid to late September and will be offering a **start-up supply** to community offices soon after. As several deliveries are expected through to December, clinics will be able to **re-order vaccine**. As in previous years, multi-group practices should place orders for the entire group, and please wait to schedule your influenza immunization clinics until we communicate further details on vaccine arrival and distribution.

You can reach a Medical Health Officer at 604.675.3900 Toll free at 1.855.675.3900
For public health emergencies after hours contact the Medical Health Officer on call at 604.527.4893

Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officers

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