

# Keeping our Mob safe this flu season

## What is the flu?

Influenza (flu) is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It affects the nose, throat and lungs and can range from mild to severe illness.

Flu is more serious than the common cold and can lead to complications such as pneumonia, sepsis, and in severe cases, hospitalisation.

Flu can occur any time of year but is most common during the autumn and winter months.

Flu is a leading cause of hospitalisation in our communities.

To prevent going to hospital, we strongly recommend early vaccination for all our Mob aged six months and over.

## Symptoms of the flu

People with the flu may experience some or all of the following:



fever and chills



feeling extremely tired



cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose



nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea (more common in kids)



muscle aches, joint pain and headaches

Symptoms may last more than a week, and some people may become very unwell and need hospital care.

## How the flu spreads

Flu spreads easily through:



droplets in the air when someone coughs or sneezes



touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

People with the flu can spread it before they feel sick and while symptoms continue.

## Who is most at risk?

The flu can be serious for anyone, but especially for:

- Elders and older adults
- young children (jarjum)
- pregnant people
- people with chronic health conditions.

Children under 5 are at higher risk of complications such as pneumonia.

## Who can get the flu vaccine?

- everyone 6 months and older
- free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (all ages from 6 months) under the National Immunisation Program
- free for everyone, subsidised by the Queensland government

## FluMist (nasal spray) for jarjum 2-17 years

A needle-free nasal spray option is available for children and young people aged 2-17 years.

This can make vaccination easier for jarjum and young people who are nervous around needles.

### How to Prevent the Flu

You can help protect yourself and Community by:



getting vaccinated every year



staying home if feeling unwell, and especially avoiding high-risk settings such as aged care and childcare



calling your doctors' surgery ahead first if you are unwell. They will advise what to do to see a doctor safely.



covering coughs and sneezes with your elbow



avoiding contact with people who have cold and flu symptoms – wear a mask if you cannot distance from people who show these symptoms



washing hands regularly with soap and water



keeping surfaces clean

### Diagnosis and treatment

Your GP may confirm flu with a nose/throat swab.

Most people recover at home by:

- resting
- drinking plenty of water
- taking medication for pain/fever if needed.

Seek medical care if symptoms get worse, you have trouble breathing, or you are in a higher-risk group. Some higher risk people may qualify for antiviral medication.

### When should you stay home?

Stay home and avoid contact with others while you have symptoms.

If symptoms worsen or you develop severe tiredness, difficulty breathing, or ongoing fever, seek medical care.

### Flu vaccination at UIIH clinics

UIIH clinics provide culturally safe flu vaccination for Community. Also sing out to us about vaccines for other respiratory viruses, including RSV and COVID-19. RSV vaccines are available free of charge for Mob over 60 and everyone over 75.

During the 2026 flu campaign, you can also receive:



Tote bag



Socks



Water bottle



kid's crayons & bubbles