



'Flu season is just around the corner! 'Flu vaccine available NOW!

- Free for Australians aged >65 years or Aboriginal Australians aged >50 years

Who else needs 'flu vaccine?

Recommended specifically for:

- Aboriginals aged >15 years
- Individuals aged >6 months with chronic conditions or impaired immunity
- Those in contact with or visiting aged care facilities, hospitals, childcare facilities
- Pregnant mums; partners/parents/children of pregnant mums or those planning a pregnancy
- Healthcare workers, childcare staff, teachers
- Individuals involved in poultry industry
- Individuals providing essential services
- ANYONE who wants to beat the flu! You could be in bed for a week or more!

Why pregnant mums need 'flu vaccine

- Reduces hospitalisation due to 'flu complications
- Reduces risk of miscarriage or harm to the foetus
- New research shows evidence of protection for infants for up to 6 months when mum was vaccinated in pregnancy (n engl j med 359;15 www.nejm.org october 9, 2008)

What about kids?

- Aged > 6 months to 9 years – only in initial dose year, need x2 doses at least 1 month apart
- If inadvertently not given x2 doses in first year, should have x2 doses the 2nd year.
- Aged 6 months to 3 years use half adult dose; aged 3 years or older use full dose
- Especially recommended if child attends childcare facility

Questions about 'flu vaccine

- Does 'flu vaccine cause flu? **No**, it is not a "live" vaccine so cannot cause disease!
- Is the 'flu vaccine safe? **Yes**, the vaccine occasionally causes pain at site of injection or mild cold-like symptoms for a couple of days. Allergic reactions are rare and can be treated with adrenaline
- Why are 'flu vaccines needed every year? Because the strains of 'flu change slightly every year and each year the vaccine is made to include strains that are expected to cause severe illness in the coming season.
- How long before the 'flu vaccine starts protecting? About two weeks; until then the individual can get the 'flu; will not protect against 'flu strains not included in the vaccine

Not Time to Forget Pertussis Vaccine! Vaccine now free for some adults!

1. The pertussis epidemic continues in NSW. 3,000 pertussis cases in NSW as at early March '09!
2. Babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated are most at risk
3. DTPa-hexa (INFANRIX[®] hexa) can be given to babies at **6 weeks of age** during the outbreak
4. For a limited time, **FREE dTpa vaccine (adult pertussis-containing vaccine)** from GP for:
 - Parents planning a pregnancy
 - All new parents and grandparents
 - Any other adults who regularly care for infants

- Can be given at same time as 'flu vaccine or pneumococcal vaccine or any other vaccine
- Vaccine or disease protection only last 5-8 years, so even those with past pertussis infection need to be vaccinated
- Free Boostrix vaccine available from PHU only for 15yo booster dose only (If in Y10, given at school)
- Keep young babies away from coughing people!
- Everyone in a household where there is a baby should be up-to-date with their pertussis vaccines