

Influenza Vaccine for People Aged 65 Years and Over

What vaccines are available for people aged 65 years and over?

The National Immunisation Program provides free influenza vaccine for people aged 65 years and over. In 2018, two new vaccines are available for people aged 65 years and over from GPs or some local council immunisation sessions. These are called Trivalent Influenza vaccines (TIVs). These vaccines cover two influenza A viruses and one influenza B virus. These new vaccines have been specifically developed to boost the immune response in older people.

Are there different brands of vaccine available?

Two different flu vaccines have been included in the National Immunisation Program. The two vaccines provide the same level of protection. It does not matter which one you receive.

How do these vaccines differ from the vaccine available in previous years?

In 2017, people aged 65 years and over received a Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (QIV). QIVs cover two influenza A and two influenza B viruses. 2017 was a year when a very high number of people, particularly those in older age groups, became unwell with the flu, even if they had received the vaccine. The new (TIV) vaccines, which boost the immune response in older people, are recommended to help prevent this happening this year.

While QIVs do cover an additional influenza B virus, the benefits of an enhanced immune response produced by the specifically formulated TIVs should outweigh this.

Can people aged less than 65 years choose to have these TIVs?

No. These TIVs are only registered for use for people aged 65 years and over.

For further information please:

- Speak to your doctor or clinic nurse
- See the DHHS Influenza website www.flu.tas.gov.au
- Call the Public Health Hotline - Tasmania on **1800 671 738**
- Call Immunise Australia on 1800 671 811 or go to www.immunise.health.gov.au

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