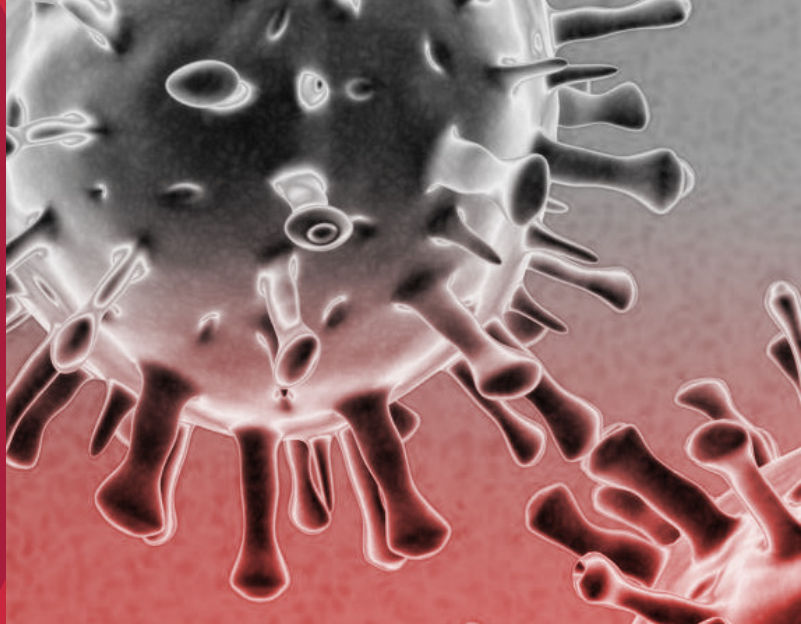


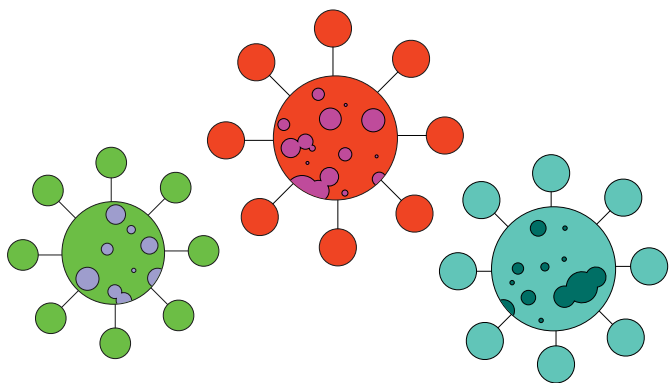
› January 2022

# INFLUENZA FACT SHEET



## 1 INFLUENZA IS NOT 'JUST A COLD'

- › Influenza (commonly known as flu) is a **highly contagious** and potentially **life-threatening** disease.
- › Even young and healthy people may take **2 weeks or more** to fully recover from influenza.
- › Influenza causes an estimated **1,500 - 2,500 deaths, 18,000 hospitalisations** and **300,000 GP consultations** annually in Australia.

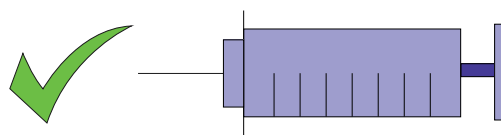


## 2 YOU MAY BE INFECTIOUS BEFORE YOU FEEL ILL FROM INFLUENZA

- › Most people may infect others **1 day before symptoms develop**, i.e. you may pass the flu to someone else before you know you are sick.
- › You are likely to remain infectious for **up to 5-7 days** after becoming sick.
- › Children may be infectious for **more than 7 days**. Some people can be infected with the virus but have no symptoms.

## 3 THE INFLUENZA VACCINE CANNOT CAUSE INFLUENZA

- › It **does not contain any live viruses** and therefore **cannot cause the illness**.

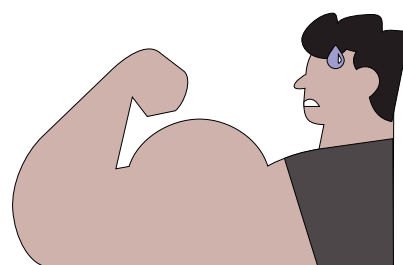


## 4 THE INFLUENZA VACCINE IS SAFE

- › Influenza vaccines have been **used successfully around the world for many years** with **billions** of doses given.
- › Serious adverse reactions to the vaccine are **rare**. Common reactions are **local redness** and **swelling**; other mild symptoms including **headaches, fever** and **sore muscles** may occur in **1-10%** of people but are limited to **1-2 days**.

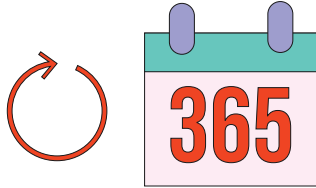
## 5 HEALTHY PEOPLE CAN GET SICK WITH INFLUENZA

- › Being fit and healthy **does not protect you from influenza** infection. Even healthy people should be vaccinated against influenza.



## 6 IT IS NECESSARY TO GET VACCINATED AGAINST INFLUENZA EVERY YEAR

- Types of influenza viruses in the community **change every year** so a **new vaccine is made yearly** to protect against current strains.
- Immunity provided by the vaccine **declines** over the course of a year, starting as early as **5-6 months after vaccination**. Therefore, you must **vaccinate every year** regardless of vaccine strain changes and time the vaccination so it is **at peak effectiveness** when needed most (**@ peak of flu season**).



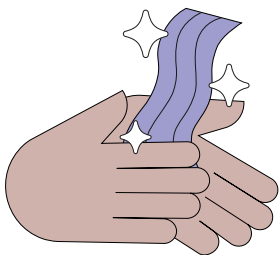
## 7 THE VACCINE DOES NOT PROTECT YOU AGAINST BIRD FLU OR COVID-19

- The seasonal (annual) influenza vaccine **protects against the strain of influenza** circulating that year.
- However, it **does not protect against avian influenza** (bird flu) or the **pandemic coronavirus** (COVID-19).

**BIRD FLU**      **COVID-19**  
X                      X

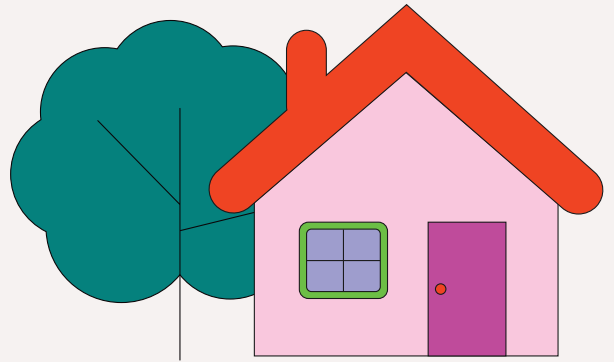
## 8 SOAP AND WATER IS THE BEST WAY TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS

- Washing hands with **soap and water** is the **best way to reduce the number of microbes** in most situations.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based **hand sanitizer** with **at least 60% alcohol**.



## 9 STAY HOME IF YOU ARE ILL

- Stay home** if you are unwell or recovering from illness to:
  - Avoid making your colleagues sick
  - Stop the spread of illness
  - Recover properly
  - Avoid wasting time at work
  - Minimize disruption for your employer



## 10 KNOW THE CORRECT WAY TO COUGH AND SNEEZE

- Covering your nose and mouth with a thick tissue** is the best way to contain your germs. If you do not have access to a tissue, you should **sneeze into your elbow**. And, remember:
  - Don't sneeze into your hands
  - Wash your hands.
  - Stay away from people.

