



October 12, 2020

FLU SHOTS 2020-2021

We have been fielding many questions about this year's flu shots from patients eager to receive theirs... Rest assured that we have now received our first limited shipment of vaccines, and have been putting much thought into how best to provide them to you!

This letter contains a lot of information on this year's influenza vaccines, GFHC's plans for flu shots, and the 2020/21 flu season in general. Please do take the time to review it carefully.

FLU + COVID = BFFs?

As our patients know, we strongly recommend getting a flu shot EVERY year. That being said: 2020 has been a different sort of year in a lot of different ways, to put it mildly.... If you have been hesitant to get a flu shot for any reason in the past, we urge you consider getting vaccinated this year!

Reasons to get your flu shot this year include:

- Individual protection against influenza
 - Decreased burden on a health care system already dealing with COVID-19
 - Decreased chance of an illness that can be confused with COVID-19
 - Decreased need for COVID testing, at a time when our testing centres have already been struggling to keep up
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VACCINE OPTIONS: 2020-2021 - Flu shot options available in Ontario this year:

<i>Ages</i>	<i>Type of influenza Vaccines</i>	<i>Influenza Vaccine Products</i>
6 months - 8 years	Standard-dose quadrivalent (QIV)	FluLaval Tetra Fluzone® Quadrivalent
9 years - 64 years	Standard-dose quadrivalent (QIV)	FluLaval Tetra Fluzone® Quadrivalent Flucelvax® Quad
65 years and over	High-dose trivalent (TIV) Standard-dose quadrivalent (QIV)	Fluzone® High-Dose FluLaval Tetra Fluzone® Quadrivalent Flucelvax® Quad

Modified from: Public Health Ontario - [FACT SHEET: Influenza Vaccines for the 2020–2021 Influenza Season](#)



- **Children (>6 months):**
 - Flu vaccine will only be available by injection. Nasal spray flu vaccine (FluMist, previously an option for Children 2-17 years old) is once again NOT available in Canada this year.
 - Children under 9 receiving flu shots for the first time ever should receive a second dose at least 4 weeks after the first dose.
 - Children under 5 years old will need to come into our office to receive their shots. However, children 5 years and older can receive their shots in participating pharmacies if preferred.
 - **Seniors (>65 years):** High-Dose flu vaccine will once again be available for all adults 65 and older this year, and may provide slightly increased protection against influenza. This year pharmacies will be able to offer the HD flu shot as well.
 - **Pharmacies:** As noted, flu shots are also available at most local pharmacies for adults and children 5 years of age and older. If it is more convenient for you to get vaccinated at a pharmacy, it is certainly appropriate to do so!
 - *****If you do receive the flu shot somewhere other than our office (eg. a pharmacy, your workplace), we strongly encourage you to advise us (via DSG Secure Email or phone message) so we can update your chart accordingly.*****
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GFHC FLU SHOT CLINICS

As in past years, in order to offer our patients flu shots with as much efficiency as possible, we will be making our office available for Flu Shot Clinics. However, as we all know, this year is NOT like past years-- and due to the ongoing realities of COVID-19, we have been giving much thought to how best to organize our Flu Clinics at this time. Under normal circumstances, we always try our best to avoid long wait times at our Flu Clinics; given the current situation, we also must ensure that physical distancing and infection control protocols are maintained. For starters, we hope to achieve this by running more Flu Clinics than in the past, as you'll note below.

Likewise, pandemic restrictions mean patients will not be able to congregate in our waiting room or in the front foyer of our building. We anticipate having patients move through our office (and our building) in a one-way line, such that patients will enter the clinic from the front door, register, receive their shot, and then exit from the back of the building. Floor signs (and our staff!) will help ensure this process flows in an orderly and efficient manner. However, given physical distancing, this might mean that patients in line will have to wait outside the building for a short time. We're counting on the weather to cooperate-- but at the same time, this is Canada: dress ready to bare your arm, but also to brave the elements if necessary!

As you will note below, we have also designated certain Clinic days as prioritizing different groups of patients. Likewise, we ask that, where possible, patients plan to arrive according to



the time slot assigned alphabetically by last names. Again, our hope is that this will help avoid crowding and longer lines at any given time.

We recognize that no system will be perfect for everybody. However, we ask that all our patients bear with us while we do our best to figure this out!

*****PLEASE DO NOT COME TO FLU SHOT CLINICS/OUR OFFICE
IF YOU ARE FEELING SICK*****

We ask that all patients complete the Ontario [Self-Assessment Tool](#) if you are experiencing any symptoms.

FLU SHOT CLINICS

1) Friday October 16 - 12:00-4:00pm -- PRIORITY: SENIORS (>65)

Last name A-E: 12:00 - 1:00
Last name F-M: 1:00 - 2:00
Last name N-S: 2:00 - 3:00
Last name T-Z: 3:00 - 4:00

2) Tuesday October 20 - 12:00-4:00pm -- PRIORITY: KIDS (<5) & FAMILIES

Last name A-E: 12:00 - 1:00
Last name F-M: 1:00 - 2:00
Last name N-S: 2:00 - 3:00
Last name T-Z: 3:00 - 4:00

3) Friday October 30 - 12:00-4:00pm -- OPEN

Last name A-E: 12:00 - 1:00
Last name F-M: 1:00 - 2:00
Last name N-S: 2:00 - 3:00
Last name T-Z: 3:00 - 4:00

Additional dates - TBD (check our website for updates: generations.ourmd.ca)

REMINDERS:

- Everyone 2-years-old and over should be wearing a mask!
- Flu Shot Clinics are for flu shots only (no other health concerns will be addressed). Likewise, clinics are for our own registered patients only (as our limited supply of vaccines can not be offered to the general public).
- During this busy time, please do NOT attempt to book an office appointment solely in order to get your shot.



- Again, while we are very pleased to see many of our patients eager to get their shots already, we are also aware that there are concerns about availability early on. Please note that the first batches of vaccines only started shipping the week of October 5-9, and initial shipments are always somewhat limited. It is still early-- there is no rush to get one's shot right away... In fact, [late October](#) may well be the best time to get vaccinated!

RESOURCES

- Ontario.ca: [The Flu - flu facts](#)
- Toronto Public Health - [Flu Prevention for the 2020/2021 Season](#)
- CDC (U.S.): [Similarities and Differences between Flu and COVID-19](#)