

Influenza Vaccine Informed Consent

THE FLU - Influenza (flu) is a respiratory infection caused by viruses. When people get the flu, they may have fever, chills, headache, dry cough, or muscle aches. Illness may last several days or a week or more and complete recovery is usual. However, complications may lead to pneumonia or death in some people.

The consequences of not being vaccinated against influenza could endanger your health and the health of those with whom you have contact, including:

- patients in this healthcare setting
- coworkers
- family
- community

THE VACCINE - An injection of flu vaccine will not give you the flu because the vaccine contains only noninfectious viral material. The vaccine is made from viruses selected yearly by the United State Public Health Service. Vaccines will begin to provide an immunity after about one or two weeks, and immunity may decrease on average, after several months. Flu shots are not effective against all possible strains of influenza virus.

Unlike the flu shot, the nasal spray flu vaccine does contain live viruses. However, the viruses are attenuated (weakened) and cannot cause flu illness. The weakened viruses are cold-adapted, which means they are designed to only cause infection at the cooler temperatures found within your nose. The viruses cannot infect your lungs or other areas where warmer temperatures exist.

RISKS AND POSSIBLE SIDE REACTIONS - Side effects of influenza vaccine injection are generally mild in adults and occur at low frequency. These reactions consist of tenderness at the injection site (if vaccinated by injection), fever, chills, headaches, or muscular aches. These symptoms may last up to forty-eight hours.

Following vaccination with nasal spray flu vaccine some adults 18-49 years of age may experience runny nose or nasal congestion, cough, chills, tiredness/weakness, sore throat and headache. These side effects are generally mild and short-lasting.

In 1976 some people who received the flu vaccine developed a rare, temporary paralytic disorder called Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS). Since then, there has always been a concern that GBS could occur from vaccines. Data suggests that there is no increased risk of GBS with this vaccine. This risk of influenza and its complications (including death) are far greater. However, we must inform you of the theoretical risk of GBS.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS - Pregnant women should consult with their personal physicians before receiving this vaccine.

Persons who are allergic to thimerosal, eggs, chicken feathers, chicken dander, or latex should not receive this vaccine until they have consulted their personal physicians.

Persons with an active neurological disorder such as multiple sclerosis or a history of previous GBS should consult with their personal physicians prior to receiving this vaccine.

Persons with fever should not receive this vaccine. Persons who have received another type of vaccine within the past fourteen days should see their personal physicians before receiving this vaccine.

If you have a reaction, see your personal physician immediately.

