

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SWINE INFLUENZA (FLU) VACCINE (MONOVALENT)

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The Disease

Influenza (flu) is caused by viruses. When people get 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. For the elderly and people with diabetes or heart, lung, or kidney diseases, flu may be especially serious.

It is unlikely that you have adequate natural protection against swine flu, since it has not caused widespread human outbreaks in 45 years.

The Vaccine

The vaccine will not give you flu because it is made from killed viruses. Today's flu vaccines cause fewer side effects than those used in the past. In contrast with some other vaccines, flu vaccine can be taken safely during pregnancy.

One shot will protect most people from swine flu during the next flu season; however, either a second shot or a different dosage may be required for persons under age 25. If you are under 25 and a notice regarding such information is not attached, this information will be provided to you wherever you receive the vaccine.

Possible Vaccine Side Effects

Most people will have no side effects from the vaccine. However, tenderness at the site of the shot may occur and last for several days. Some people will also have fever, chills, headache, or muscle aches within the first 48 hours.

Special Precautions

As with any vaccine or drug, the possibility of severe or potentially fatal reactions exists. However, flu vaccine has rarely been associated with severe or fatal reactions. In some instances people receiving vaccine have had allergic reactions. You should note very carefully the following precautions:

- Children under a certain age should not routinely receive flu vaccine. Please ask about age limitations if this information is not attached.
- People with known allergy to eggs should receive the vaccine only under special medical supervision.
- People with fever should delay getting vaccinated until the fever is gone.
- People who have received another type of vaccine in the past 14 days should consult a physician before taking the flu vaccine.

If you have any questions about flu or flu vaccine, please ask.

Important Information from the U.S. Public Health Service about Swine Flu and Victoria Flu Vaccines

INTRODUCTION

You probably have heard a good deal about swine flu and swine flu vaccine. You may know, for example, that swine flu caused an outbreak of several hundred cases at Ft. Dix, New Jersey, early in 1976—and that before then swine flu had not caused outbreaks among people since the 1920's.

With the vast majority of Americans being susceptible to swine flu, it is possible that there could be an epidemic this winter. No one can say for sure. However, if an epidemic were to break out, millions of people could get sick. Therefore, a special swine flu vaccine has been prepared and tested which should protect most people who receive it.

Certain people, such as those with chronic medical problems and the elderly, need annual protection against flu. Therefore, besides protection against swine flu, they also need protection against another type of flu (Victoria flu) that was around last winter and could occur again this winter. A separate vaccine has been prepared to give them protection against both types of flu.

These vaccines have been field tested and shown to produce very few side effects. Some people who receive the vaccine had fever and soreness during the first day or two after vaccination. These tests and past experience with other flu vaccines indicate that anything more severe than this would be highly unlikely.

Many people ask questions about flu vaccination during pregnancy. An advisory committee of the Public Health Service examined this question and reported that "there are no data specifically to contraindicate vaccination with the available killed virus vaccine in pregnancy. Women who are pregnant should be considered as having essentially the same balance of benefits and risks regarding influenza vaccination and influenza as the general population."

As indicated, some individuals will develop fever and soreness after vaccination. If you have more severe symptoms or if you have fever which lasts longer than a couple of days after vaccination, please consult your doctor or a health worker wherever you receive medical care.

While there is no reason to expect more serious reactions to this flu vaccination, persons who believe that they have been injured by this vaccination may have a claim. The Congress recently passed a law providing that such claims, with certain exceptions, may be filed only against the United States Government. Information regarding the filing of claims may be obtained by writing to the U.S. Public Health Service Claims Office, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Attached is more information about flu and flu vaccine. Please take the time to read it carefully. You will be asked to sign a form indicating that you understand this information and that you consent to vaccination.