

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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FREE FLU SHOTS FOR ALL VICTORIANS FROM TOMORROW

The Andrews Labor Government is making it easier than ever to get your annual flu shot this year by providing free influenza vaccinations for Victorians throughout June.

Cases of flu in Victoria have increased by more than 30 per cent in the past week alone from 10,000 to 15,000, after two years of COVID-19 and reduced international travel led to limited immunity to the common winter virus.

To help make getting the jab as easy as possible, more than 3,000 GP clinics and community pharmacies across Victoria will be invited to offer the free flu vaccinations from this Wednesday as part of a \$33 million package.

The flu vaccination is already free for eligible groups including children under five years, people over 65 years, pregnant women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with increased risk medical conditions.

The Labor Government will reimburse GPs and community pharmacies for flu vaccines that are administered to any Victorians that are not usually eligible for free flu shots – so that immunisation providers can continue to use vaccine that they have already purchased.

This will mean all Victorians aged six months and over will be eligible for the free flu shot between 1 and 30 June to help boost vaccination coverage as much as possible and avoid more hospitalisations throughout winter.

Flu vaccines have already been made available to children aged five years and over from their community pharmacy, taking pressure off GPs and keeping children safe and out of hospital this winter.

As part of the push, the Government is also offering \$2,000 grants to immunisation providers to help them manage the additional demand – such as rostering on more staff and opening for longer hours.

The cold weather also serves as a timely reminder to make sure your child is up to date with all their vaccinations, including their COVID-19 jabs. There is no interval required between receiving a COVID-19 and flu vaccine.

Victorians are encouraged to contact their local GP or community pharmacy from tomorrow, Wednesday, 1 June, to book their free vaccine.

Anyone with cold and flu symptoms should get tested for COVID-19 and remain at home until their symptoms have resolved – regardless of whether it turns out to be COVID-19 or flu. People who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate for seven days from the date of their result.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

“This will be the first time in two years that we will face a real flu season – we need all Victorians to roll up their sleeves and help protect their loved ones and our health system by getting vaccinated.”

“Victorians really took up the call to arms when it came to COVID-19 vaccinations, and we know they can do it again – so we’re removing as many barriers as possible to help boost vaccine coverage.”

“Help your family stay safe this winter by getting vaccinated for both the flu and COVID-19, getting tested if you have any symptoms and staying home while unwell.”

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