

The flu shot: explained

With now the time to get vaccinated ahead of the winter influenza (flu) season, a [new 'explainer' article](#) from national not-for-profit NPS MedicineWise provides evidence-based information to answer everyone's questions about the flu shot.

Flu is a major cause of illness, and experts agree that April to June is a good time to get your flu shot in Australia.

NPS MedicineWise medical adviser and general practitioner Dr Jill Thistlethwaite says 2019 is shaping up to be a bad year for the flu.

"The flu is a serious disease that for some people can lead to severe complications such as pneumonia, heart damage, brain damage and even death," says Dr Thistlethwaite.

"At a minimum, most people with flu will be unwell for at least a week and unable to go to work or school.

"This new article from NPS MedicineWise explains that the most important weapon against flu and its complications is vaccination.

"The take-home message is that annual vaccination is recommended for everyone over 6 months of age, so ask your GP, clinic or pharmacist about having a flu shot now," she said.

The article covers who is most at risk of flu, who should be vaccinated against it, and why you need another flu shot this year even if you had one last year.

It also looks at safety, information for different age groups, and other ways you can help stop the spread of flu including staying home if you are unwell and maintaining personal hygiene, especially by washing your hands.

To read the full explainer article, go to nps.org.au/consumers/the-flu-shot-explained

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Spokespeople are available for media interviews.

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