Flu Prevention is an Act of Love

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Ministry of Health Malaysia

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Malaysian Paediatric Association

Malaysian Society of Infectious Diseases & Chemotherapy

Prevent Influenza (Flu)

As Part of Managing Your Diabetes or Heart Disease

Reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke and other complications

In collaboration with

Malaysian Influenza Working Group

MEMS Malaysian Endocrine & Metabolic Society

mma

MHAS

Age Cope

U3A University of the Third Age

Supported by

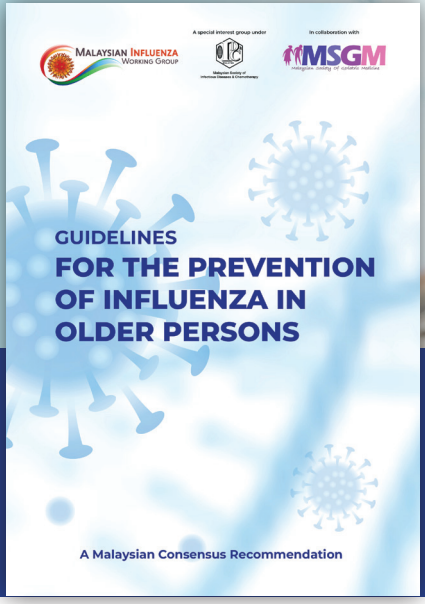
VIP Vaccination is Protection

A Deadly Combination: Advancing Age, Existing Chronic Conditions & The Flu

Everyone hopes to age gracefully and healthily. However, as you age, your immune system does not work well and it is also likely for lung function to gradually decline[1,2].

This makes you more susceptible to infections, such as the flu (influenza) which may lead to severe disease. The flu may also worsen your pre-existing conditions (eg: diabetes or heart disease) and increase your risk of developing serious or life-threatening complications[3].

This is why advancing age, existing chronic conditions and flu make a deadly combination.



Experts strongly recommend that all persons aged **60 years and above,** especially those with chronic health conditions, **receive an influenza vaccine annually.**

Alarming Facts & Stats

About Flu Hospitalisation

7 out of 10
people aged ≥ **65 years**[4]

9 out of 10
patients had **at least one chronic condition**[5]

The Risk Of Flu-Related Death Increases

20x
if one has **heart and lung disease**[6]

5x
if one has **heart disease**[6]

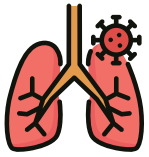
3x
if one has **diabetes**[7]

Up to **85%** of **flu-related deaths** occurred in people aged ≥ **65 years**[4]

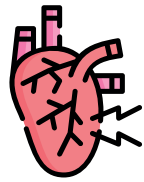
Flu and Advancing Age

You are at higher risk of developing severe flu which can cause respiratory distress that would require hospitalisation or intensive care[8]. Flu can also present with symptoms such as dizziness which may lead to falls[8].

There is also the risk of developing life-threatening complications such as:



Pneumonia (2nd leading cause of death in Malaysia)[9]

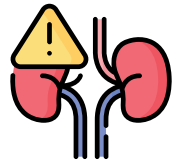


Inflammation of the heart[3]

Inflammation of the brain[3]

Inflammation of the muscle tissue[3]

Sepsis (life-threatening response to infection)[3]



An extreme response to infection results in multi-organ failure[3]

Did you know that flu can trigger the first heart attack and stroke?

In adults aged ≥ 40 years with no prior history of heart attack or stroke, influenza infection within the first 3 days can:

- Increase the risk of heart attack up to 10 times[10]
- Increase the risk of stroke up to 8 times[10]

Flu Vaccination for Your Protection

1

Reduces the severity of symptoms[11]

2

Protects the independence of the aged[12]

3

Reduces the risk of major cardiovascular events by 36%[10]

4

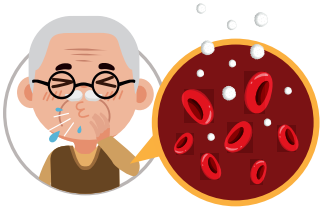
Reduces the risk of hospitalisation by 45%[13]

5

Reduces the risk of death by 42%[13]

Flu and Diabetes

The flu can make your diabetes worse, making it difficult to manage and treat. Blood glucose levels may go extremely low or high due to a severe flu infection and this can lead to diabetic emergencies.



Body **produces glucose** to provide energy to fight the infection

+

The body also **releases stress hormones** when ill

Stress reduces the effectiveness of insulin.

Very high glucose levels in the body leading to a **diabetic emergency**

Flow Chart 1[12,14]

Flu Vaccination for People with Diabetes

22% reduction in risk of heart failure[15]

30% reduction in risk of stroke[15]

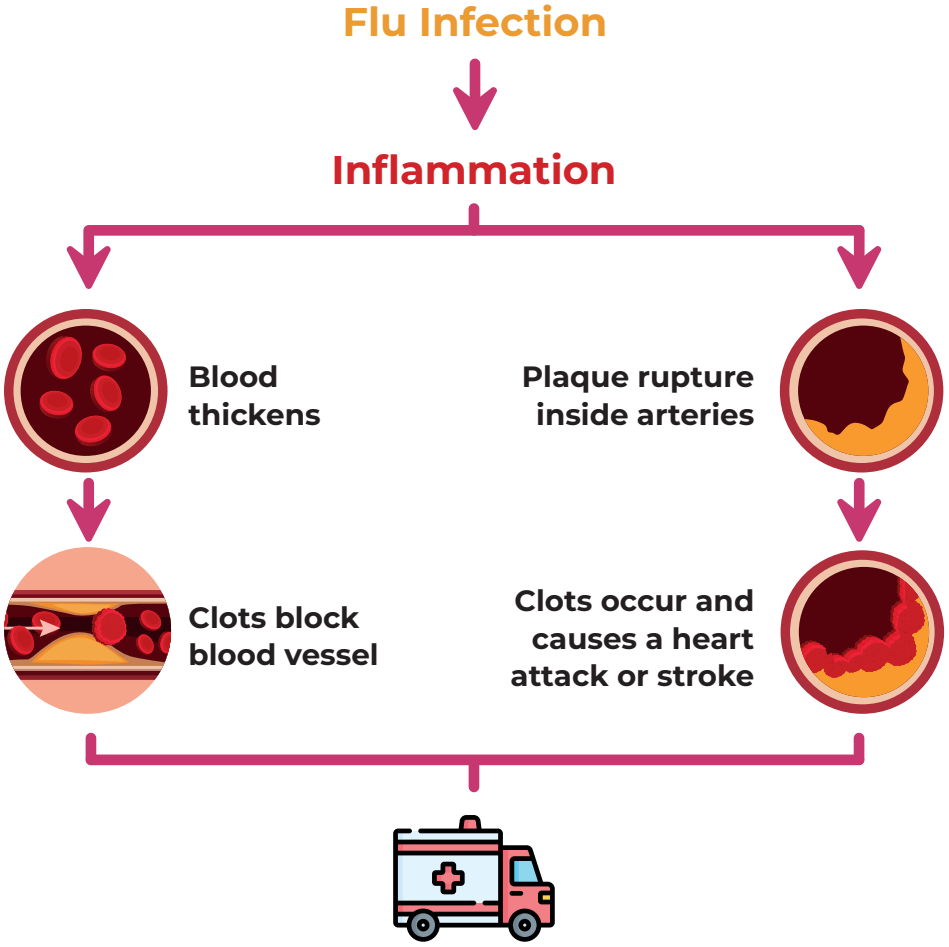
19% reduction in risk of acute myocardial infarction (heart attack)[15]

15% reduction in risk of pneumonia or flu[15]

24% lower death rate than those who are not vaccinated[15]

Flu and Your Heart

Heart disease causes structural damage to the heart such as the narrowing and hardening of arteries and weakening of the heart muscles[16]. Flu increases the risk of cardiovascular events with poor outcomes[17]. As you age, you may not be able to tolerate the flu due to the weakened heart condition.



Flow Chart 2[16,17,18]

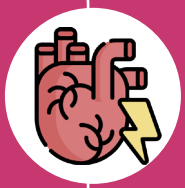
Flu Vaccination to Protect Your Heart

Flu vaccination reduces the risk of major cardiovascular events by **36%**[10]

Flu vaccination reduces the risk of death in patients with heart failure by **18%**[19]

45% reduced risk of adverse cardiovascular outcomes following a flu shot for higher-risk patients with a recent acute coronary syndrome[20]

Flu vaccination was associated with a reduced risk of heart disease in the aged population with previous history of heart attack[21]



Flu Vaccination Facts: Important Facts You Need to Know

1. Get your flu vaccine every year to effectively protect yourself as the flu virus changes every year[22].
2. You cannot catch the flu from the vaccine[23].
3. Flu vaccination is safe, some side effects may occur after vaccination but it is normally mild and resolves within 2 days[24,25].
4. A small percentage of people may still catch the flu after vaccination, but the disease will be milder[26].
5. As with any vaccination, you should not get vaccinated for the flu if you have fever[27].
6. If you plan to travel, be sure to get your flu vaccine at least 2 weeks before you travel as it takes time for antibodies to develop in the body and provide adequate protection against flu[28].
7. Don’t forget to continue to practice good personal hygiene such as washing your hands often with soap and water and cleaning touched surfaces frequently[29].

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Flu Prevention is an
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Get your flu shot today!

For more information, please visit our website at:
https://actoflove.ifl.my/

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