

SEASONAL FLU VACCINATION 2022-2023***As a health care worker, am I required to be vaccinated against influenza (the flu)?***

The health and well-being of everyone who works at NYP is as much a priority for us as the safety of our patients. Influenza vaccines are safe and effective. NYP team members are encouraged to obtain vaccination against seasonal influenza to promote the safety and well-being of our patients and visitors, our communities, our families, and ourselves. Participation in the NYP Flu Vaccination Program (**October 3, 2022 – November 30**) is mandatory. All employees must meet one of the following criteria by **November 30**:

- Receive a Flu vaccine from WHS or a Flu Champion
- Provide WHS with acceptable proof of outside vaccination via [VaxApp](https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp) (<https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp>)
- Receive NYP approval for a medical or religious exemption via [VaxApp](https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp) (Deadline to submit Medical/Religious Exemption Request is **October 28, 2022**. Individuals who received a religious or permanent medical exemption during the 2021-2022 Flu season do not need to reapply. All temporary medical exemptions from that period are considered expired.)

QR code for [VaxApp](https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp):

***Where can I get the flu vaccine?***

Workforce Health & Safety (WHS) is providing the seasonal flu vaccine free of charge to all hospital employees, physicians, and volunteers. You may get vaccinated at specially scheduled locations and times throughout the hospitals and medical centers, from a Flu Champion, and in central locations throughout the Hospital such as cafeterias and lobbies. Please obtain flu vaccines at your designated NYP campus site.

For NYP employees currently enrolled in CVS pharmacy coverage plan have the following benefit:

- The employees and their dependents (over 18 years old) enrolled in the same insurance plan can receive flu vaccines for free at any of the 9,000 CVS/pharmacy locations. CVS' Broad Vaccine Network includes over 50,000 pharmacies including major chains like Duane Reade, Rite Aid, Walgreens, and Walmart in addition to

many smaller chains and independents. The flu shot age requirement for dependents are established by and can vary by state.

- Bring CVS Caremark Pharmacy Insurance Card to receive the vaccine.
- Submit CVS “Vaccine Consent and Administration Record” form to Workforce Health & Safety via [VaxApp \(https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp\)](https://myapps.nyp.org/VaxApp).

What is the policy regarding wearing a surgical mask?

- Due to COVID-19, New York State Department of Health mandate requires all health care personnel to wear a surgical mask when working in clinical buildings where patients are present. Staff should be wearing a surgical mask at all times while at work, except when otherwise indicated by a personal protective equipment (PPE) protocol, or when eating with social distancing or when alone in a room.
- Surgical masks will be available at all Hospital entry areas and in clinical areas.
- Masks should be changed whenever it is soiled or might have become soiled, or if it becomes moist.
- N-95 masks are not needed to comply with this policy and should not be used for this purpose

What will happen when an employee refuses to wear a mask while at work?

Compliance with this policy is mandatory, and non-compliance will result in corrective action. Managerial and Security staff will monitor mask use in the designated areas.

How will the Hospital identify whether or not someone is vaccinated?

Compliance and vaccination will be documented and maintained by WHS. Updated Flu compliance reports for NYP employees are accessible in Workday on the Manager’s Dashboard:

- Access: DASHBOARDS → MY TEAM COMPLIANCE
- Updated 3 times a week for the first four weeks of October and then updated daily through November 30 (program end date)
- Proof of outside vaccination submissions may take about 3 - 5 business days to reflect in the Workday Dashboard

Do I need to do anything else if I need a medical or religious exemption to vaccination?

Personnel who are seeking an exemption from receiving the vaccine based on a medical contraindication or a religious reason are required to submit an exemption request form via [VaxApp](#). Medical contraindications must be documented and are reviewed by Workforce Health and Safety. Individuals who received a religious or permanent medical exemption during the 2021-2022 Flu season do not need to reapply. All temporary medical exemptions from that period are considered expired.

If I am granted a medical or religious exemption for vaccination and work in a non-clinical building (e.g. corporate office building) where patients are not present, do I have to wear a surgical mask?

You do not need to wear a surgical mask.

What should I do if I have a medical contraindication to the flu vaccine?

Employees with a medical contraindication or precautions to the vaccine must provide documentation from their allergist or an appropriate specialist to WHS via [VaxApp](#).

Contraindications to all influenza vaccines include the following:

- Severe allergic reaction after a previous dose or to a vaccine component.

Precautions to all influenza vaccines include the following:

- History of Guillain Barré Syndrome.
- Current moderate or severe acute illness with or without fever (until symptoms have abated).

The following are not considered contraindications to influenza vaccination:

- Minor acute illness (e.g., diarrhea and minor upper respiratory tract illnesses, including otitis media).
- Mild to moderate local reactions and/or low-grade or moderate fever following a prior dose of the vaccine.
- Sensitivity to a vaccine component (e.g., upset stomach, soreness, redness, itching, swelling at the injection site).
- Current antimicrobial therapy.
- Disease exposure or convalescence.
- Pregnant or immunosuppressed person in the household.
- Breastfeeding.
- Family history.
- Any condition which is itself an indication for influenza vaccination.

(New York State Department of Health Influenza Vaccine Medical Exemption Statement for Health Care Personnel: <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-4482.pdf> ; last accessed 9/23/22)

WHS can refer you for allergy testing if needed. Many people who have a history of egg allergy in childhood can safely receive the flu vaccine. This will be determined by an allergist. WHS also has egg-free flu vaccines; if interested, please contact Workforce Health & Safety Clinic.

If I received the flu vaccine somewhere other than Workforce Health & Safety, do I need to do anything?

If you were vaccinated for influenza elsewhere, you must submit proof of vaccination to [VaxApp](#), including:

- The **date** you received your vaccine
- The **type/brand** of flu vaccine you received
- The **contact information** of the office, pharmacy, or licensed provider who administered your vaccine
- Your **full name** on the proof of vaccine document

Once uploaded via VaxApp, you will receive a receipt confirmation email from VaxApp, and then it will take about 3 - 5 business days to review and update your Flu Program compliance in Workday Dashboard if your vaccination document is acceptable.

Why do I need to be vaccinated for the flu every year?

A flu vaccine is needed every year because flu viruses are constantly changing and it is not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year. The flu vaccine is formulated each year to keep up with the flu viruses as they change. Also, studies have shown that the body's immunity to influenza viruses either through natural infection or vaccination declines over time. Getting vaccinated each year provides the best protection against influenza throughout flu season.

Is the flu vaccine safe?

Yes. The flu vaccine is made from inactive virus, so you cannot get the flu from being vaccinated. Side effects, when they occur, are generally mild and may include arm soreness or mild fever for one to two days. Allergic reactions and other complications are very rare.

Can I receive the intranasal vaccine, FluMist®, for seasonal flu instead of an injection?

Yes, FluMist®, is acceptable as vaccination for seasonal flu. However, Workforce Health & Safety will not be administering FluMist® at NYP.

Will the Hospital be offering the high dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine?

The high dose or adjuvanted flu vaccine for those 65 years old and above may become available this season depending on its supply; if interested, please contact Workforce Health & Safety.

Will there be flu stickers this year and where can I receive it?

Yes. If you are vaccinated by WHS staff or Flu Champions, a flu sticker will be placed on your work ID badge at the time of vaccination. If you have a hybrid work schedule and received your flu vaccine in the community (e.g. CVS pharmacy), then you can pick up your flu sticker at local WHS clinic the next time when you are at work as long as your proof of vaccine has been uploaded & accepted by [VaxApp](#). If you work remotely all the time and received your vaccine in the community, then you do not need to pick up a flu sticker after uploading your proof of vaccine via VaxApp.

Can I receive flu vaccine and COVID vaccine at the same time?

You may receive both flu vaccine and COVID vaccine at the same time. If planning to receive both at the same time, then you **must book an appointment** for COVID vaccination via [MyConnect](https://www.myconnectnyc.org) (<https://www.myconnectnyc.org>).

QR code for [MyConnect](https://www.myconnectnyc.org):



IF YOU DEVELOP FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS

What are the symptoms of developing flu?

Generally, the symptoms are a fever of greater than 100°F (37.80°C), plus a cough or sore throat. Fatigue and body aches are also common. Influenza may also present as pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), or respiratory distress.

If I only have mild symptoms, can I still report to or remain at work?

No. Influenza is very contagious, and if you work while you are sick there is a high risk that patients and co-workers will be exposed.

What should I do if I develop flu-like symptoms at work?

You should immediately put on a surgical mask, report to your manager or supervisor, and call Workforce Health & Safety Hotline 646-697-9470 for COVID testing since COVID and flu share similar symptoms. You should also call your personal physician if you are concerned about symptoms.

What happens if I develop flu-like symptoms at work and Workforce Health & Safety is closed during my shift?

You should immediately put on a surgical mask and report to your manager, who will send you home. You are required to call WHS Hotline 646-697-9470 the next business day, to provide symptom checks and direction. Follow your departmental procedure for notification in the event of absence from work. If you are concerned about your symptoms, call your personal physician.

What should I do if I develop flu-like symptoms while I am not at work?

Call your manager, who will instruct you to stay home and call WHS Hotline 646-697-9470 to provide symptom checks and receive direction. Follow your departmental procedure for notification in the event of absence from work. If you are concerned about your symptoms, call your personal physician.

Is there a procedure I should follow when I am ready to return to work?

All employees recovered from influenza must be cleared by contacting their local WHS Clinic during the business hours before returning to work, regardless of the number of days they were out sick.

What should I do if I am exposed to influenza?

If you are **at work** and exposed to influenza, inform your manager, who will notify Infection Prevention & Control. They will determine if it is an exposure that places you at risk and get back to your manager. If it is a true exposure, you will receive direction on what to do next.

If you are **outside of work** and exposed to a confirmed influenza, consult your physician. Influenza-exposed employees may continue working as long as they remain symptom-free.

If I develop influenza and am prescribed Tamiflu, is this medication covered under a prescription plan?

For NYP employees participating in the Caremark prescription plan, Tamiflu is available with a co-pay if your primary care doctor prescribes it to you.

FURTHER QUESTIONS: Contact WHS [Hotline 646-697-9470 \(646-NYP-WHS0\)](tel:646-697-9470)