

MAY MEDIFLASH

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR FLU VACCINE?

As the temperature starts to drop and winter creeps up on us, it's important to get your flu vaccine to ensure you and your loved ones are protected against severe infection and complications.

Flu (influenza) is caused by a virus **which spreads through droplets** released by the body when we breathe out, when we talk, cough or sneeze. Depending on a person's health status or underlying risk profile, some people can get very sick from the flu virus.

Here are five good reasons to get your flu shot this year.

- 1 The flu vaccine will help **lower your risk of becoming sick with flu.**
- 2 Although it doesn't offer complete protection against getting the flu, the vaccine does lower your chances of infection. And, if you do get flu, you'll **recover faster**. This means **you're not infectious for as long**, which helps limit the spread of infection to others.
- 3 If you're at a **high risk of developing a serious influenza illness** – like bronchitis and pneumonia – this vaccine is a must.
- 4 If you live with a person who is at risk, your vaccine is also crucial.
- 5 It is still the most effective way to protect you against flu infection and its complications.

Flu vaccines work by stimulating the production of antibodies in the body about two weeks after you get the shot. These antibodies protect against infection and serious illness. We have access to new flu vaccines every year because flu viruses change quickly. The vaccines are made to match new seasonal flu strains as closely as possible.



Flu vaccines are highly recommended for people most at risk of serious flu, including:

- 1 Children aged six months to five years.
- 2 People aged 65 or over.
- 3 People with HIV.
- 4 People who are pregnant or post-partum (usually, the first six weeks after childbirth) – the flu vaccine is safe to have while breastfeeding.
- 5 People living in care facilities (old-age homes, or chronic care and rehabilitation institutions).
- 6 People who have a chronic health condition (e.g., asthma, bronchiectasis, chronic kidney disease, coronary artery disease, diabetes [types 1 and 2], cardiac failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD], cardiomyopathy).
- 7 People who have a weakened immune system.

Getting the flu vaccination cannot give you the flu.

The flu vaccine cannot cause the flu because it does not contain a live virus. It simply allows your body to develop antibodies to protect you against serious flu infection. Flu vaccines are safe and well tolerated. In some people, they might cause pain or redness and swelling at the injection site, or a headache, fever, or muscle or joint aches. These clear up within a day or so and are just a sign that your immune system has been stimulated.

Bear in mind that it takes about two weeks after your flu jab to develop antibodies to the flu. Some people get sick after their vaccination, but it's not the vaccine that has caused this. It's more likely that they were exposed to the flu virus before or during the two weeks when the antibodies were still developing.

Who should not get a flu vaccine?

Children younger than six months of age and people with severe, life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in a flu vaccine (other than egg proteins).

How do my Scheme benefits cover my flu shot?

MEDiPOS will pay for one flu vaccination per year for every registered beneficiary.

If you are registered for certain chronic conditions, the Scheme will pay for a flu vaccine even if you have already used your benefit.

To get the full benefits of the flu vaccine, you should get vaccinated before the start of the flu season. Ideally, you should get vaccinated as soon as the 2026 flu vaccine becomes available, usually in April. It's good to get vaccinated early every year to make sure you're protected against the latest strains of the flu virus.



YOUR FREE VITALITY ACTIVE COMES TO AN END SOON

We trust that those members who took advantage of the 12 months' free Vitality Active (that came into effect last May with the change in our Administrator) have enjoyed all the wonderful benefits that come with that wellness programme. Just a reminder that this free offer will end on 30 April. When you registered you would have provided your bank details and consented to have your bank account debited from 1 May for your monthly Vitality premium.

Should you wish to discontinue your membership, you must inform Discovery Vitality of your intention

to cancel by providing a full calendar months' notice. The notice period will start from the first day of the month following the cancellation request – for example, if you give notice on 15 May, your notice month will be for the full month of June. You can request cancellation of your membership at any time by calling 011 529 7504.





GET YOUR CHRONIC MEDICATION DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

Did you know that MediRite can deliver your chronic medications? If you are not within the seven-kilometre (7km) radius of a MediRite pharmacy, you can register for their courier delivery service online or by calling 0800 01 07 01 or emailing medirite.courier@shoprite.co.za. Sign up now and Medirite Pharmacy can automatically process your order on a monthly basis and deliver it to you.

How Do I Register for this service?



1 Click on Sign Me Up to complete your online registration or download the form.



2 Complete the registration form.



3 Submit the signed registration form PLUS your valid repeat prescription to the MediRite Courier Pharmacy via email or fax.



4 Once your forms have been received, a Medirite Courier Pharmacy agent will contact you to discuss your needs.

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WE NEED YOUR DEPENDANTS' CONTACT INFORMATION



In accordance with the POPI Act, we are required to communicate directly with all members who are aged 18 and over. That means that we may not send any information regarding their treatments or their plans, claims, or any other personal information to you, the main member. We are obliged by law to send all their medical scheme information directly to them. If you have not already provided us with your adult dependants' contact details, you can do so by logging in to your profile on the MEDiPOS website or you can call us on 0860 100 078. Failure to do so means that they will miss out on important Scheme information.

JOIN US AT THE AGM

The 2026 MEDiPOS AGM will be taking place on Tuesday 7th July at 10:00 at the Cape Mail offices. We would love you to join us there – keep an eye out for more information on this event that will be coming your way soon.



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