

# The Flu Vaccine and Kidney Disease



The flu vaccine(s) protect against the *influenza virus*.

## SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU

- Fever and chills
- Cough and sore throat
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Shortness of breath

## COMPLICATIONS OF THE FLU

- Sinus or ear infections
- Inflammation of the lungs, heart, brain, or muscles
- Reduced kidney function

## FLU VACCINE DOSAGE AND TIMING RECOMMENDATIONS

### KIDNEY PATIENT (PRE-DIALYSIS)

- **1 dose per year** at the beginning of flu season (late fall).

### DIALYSIS PATIENTS

- **1 dose 1-2 times per year** (up to every 6 months).
- May be eligible for a higher dose vaccine (IIV-HD).

### TRANSPLANT PATIENTS

- **1 dose 1-2 times per year** (up to every 6 months).
- **Live vaccines are NOT recommended** for kidney transplant recipients, especially after the transplant.

## WHICH FLU VACCINE SHOULD KIDNEY PATIENTS GET?

- There are 5 non-live vaccines for the flu approved in Canada (IIV-Adj, IIV-SD, IIV-cc, IIV-HD, RIV).
- Kidney patients may receive any non-live vaccine available depending on age, health status and availability.
- There is one live attenuated vaccine approved in Canada (LAIV), but it is **not recommended** for people with kidney disease.

## FLU VACCINE SAFETY FOR KIDNEY PATIENTS

- Non-live flu vaccines are safer for people living with kidney disease compared to live flu vaccines.
- Non-live vaccines for the flu have a long and established safety record for everyone, including those with kidney disease.
- There is no evidence that flu vaccine affects kidney function.

### FAQ : Does the flu vaccine affect my dialysis treatment?

No! Non-live flu vaccines are safe for individuals on dialysis and does not interfere with treatment. You can discuss your personal situation with your healthcare team.

Vaccine availability and coverage may vary across the country.

**Always follow the advice and recommendations of your healthcare team to determine which vaccines are right for you and when.**