

# Important Notice to Staff About Influenza and COVID-19 Immunizations

## Why it's important to receive all doses of COVID-19 that you're eligible for.

We all have a responsibility to protect one another. Immunization is the single most effective means of protecting yourself, your loved ones, and the greater community from COVID-19. Without immunization, Albertans are at risk of developing severe illness and even death from this virus. Vaccines strengthen your immune system by building antibodies to help prevent diseases. Immunization is safe. It is still recommended to get the vaccine even if you were previously infected.

## Why it's important to be immunized with influenza vaccine every year.

Getting immunized against influenza every year is the most effective way to prevent against infection from changing influenza viruses. Health Care Workers (HCWs) have a unique responsibility to protect their own health as well as the wellbeing of those around them who may be at risk. Other reasons to get immunized include:

1. Reducing the increased risk for influenza exposure that comes with working in a health care setting; and
2. Lowering the risk of transmitting influenza to family, friends and vulnerable patients; and
3. Diminishing the risk of illness, serious outcomes, and even death for themselves and others.

## What happens if you do not get immunized and an influenza outbreak occurs.

In the event of an influenza outbreak at your site, the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) may make recommendations that will impact unimmunized staff members. **This may include being excluded from work or starting a prescription antiviral medication called Oseltamivir for the duration of the outbreak.** Depending on employer-employee health insurance arrangements, you may be required to pay for the antiviral.

For more information, speak with your manager, or call 811 Health Link, or visit the following AHS websites:

- [www.ahs.ca/covid19](http://www.ahs.ca/covid19)
- [www.ahs.ca/influenza](http://www.ahs.ca/influenza)

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.