

# VACCINATE AGAINST INFLUENZA (FLU)

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Every year, **UP TO 10 000 PEOPLE DIE** of the flu in South Africa<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Pregnant women, persons with HIV, the elderly, young children and those with chronic diseases like TB, diabetes, obesity and asthma are considered **AT-RISK FOR FLU-ASSOCIATED COMPLICATIONS**<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Public sector flu vaccines will be given to **PREGNANT WOMEN** and **HIV INFECTED PERSONS** as a priority

## FLU FACTS

- Influenza is caused by a virus – it can't be cured with antibiotics, but it can be prevented with a vaccine.<sup>3,6</sup> The virus changes all the time, so you need a vaccine every year<sup>3</sup>
- You cannot get flu from the vaccine. You may have a mild fever or pain at the injection site, but it is well tolerated by most people<sup>4</sup>
- The flu vaccine does not prevent colds, bronchitis or other infections – it only prevents influenza viruses<sup>4</sup>
- Anyone over age 6 months can get the vaccine, unless you have an allergy to the ingredients.<sup>3</sup> The flu vaccine should be given as soon as it is available, typically in March or April<sup>4</sup>
- To protect yourself from flu, practice good hygiene - wash your hands frequently, cough into your sleeve, limit your exposure to sick individuals, and do not share eating and drinking utensils unless they have been washed. If you are sick, stay home and get better. Visit your healthcare provider as needed<sup>3,4,5</sup>
- Annual vaccination against influenza is the best strategy for preventing disease and severe complications from influenza<sup>1</sup>

The South African Flu Forum is a partnership formed between the National Department of Health, Abbott Laboratories, the CDC, Clicks, Dis-Chem, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and Sanofi, with the aim of increasing overall flu awareness and vaccination rates in both the public and the private sector, to support the good health of all people in South Africa.

**References:** 1. National Department of Health. National Influenza Policy and Strategic Plan 2017-2021. 2. World Health Organization. Influenza (Seasonal) Fact Sheet. January 2018. Available from: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs211/en/> (Last accessed 19 February 2018). 3. Mayo Clinic. Influenza (flu). 2017. (Online) Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/flu/symptoms-causes/syc-20351719?p=1> (Last accessed 12 December 2017). 4. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. Flu Care in Day Care: The Impact of Vaccination Requirements. Available at: [www.nfid.org/day-care-report](http://www.nfid.org/day-care-report) (Last accessed 17 January 2018). 5. WebMD. 10 Tips to Ease Flu Symptoms. Available at: <https://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/coping-with-flu?print=true> (Last accessed 23 January 2018).

Abbott Laboratories S.A. (Pty) Ltd, Reg. No. 1940/014043/07, Abbott Place, 219 Golf Club Terrace, Constantia Kloof, 1709. Tel No.: 011 858 2000.  
Date of publication: March 2018. Promotional review number: ZAEINF170238



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's  
*Flu Forum*  
UNITED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FLU

