

National Health and Medical Research Council recommendations on influenza vaccination

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends routine annual influenza vaccination for all individuals over the age of 65 years¹. It is also recommended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults over 50 years of age.

The NHMRC also advises vaccination for those in the following groups:

- adults with chronic debilitating diseases, especially those with chronic cardiac, pulmonary, renal and metabolic disorders;

- children with cyanotic congenital heart disease;
- adults and children receiving immunosuppressive therapy;
- residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities.

Annual vaccination should also be considered for those in the following groups:

- staff who care for immunocompromised patients;
- staff of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities.

It is recommended that vaccination take place in the autumn in

anticipation of winter outbreaks. The formulation of the vaccine is reviewed annually to take account of the antigenic variation of the virus. The composition of the 1997 Australian vaccine has been published previously².

1. National Health and Medical Research Council *The Australian Immunisation Handbook*. 6th Edition. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service;1997.
2. Composition of the Australian influenza vaccine for the 1997 winter. *Comm Dis Intell* 1996;20:465-466.