The influenza vaccine is especially recommended for:

- Pregnant women in their 2nd and 3rd trimester
- Residents of care homes and nursing homes
- People aged over 65 years
- Children and adults with:
  - diabetes mellitus, type 1 and 2
  - chronic respiratory disease
  - chronic cardiovascular disease
  - chronic liver failure
  - chronic renal failure
  - chronic neurological disease or injury
  - impaired immune system
  - severe obesity (BMI over 40)
  - other serious or chronic diseases

Seasonal influenza vaccine

For some, seasonal influenza can cause serious complications. The health benefits can be great if you take the vaccine.

Why take the vaccine?

Almost 1 million people in Norway belong to a group with an increased risk of complications from influenza. In Norway, it is estimated that an average of 900 people die every year as a result of influenza. The vaccine can protect many of them.

Influenza can lead to pneumonia and worsening of chronic diseases. Admission to hospital may be necessary for serious complications of influenza. Some individuals have permanently impaired health following a bout of severe influenza.

During the influenza season, people with cardiovascular diseases are at greater risk of heart attacks, stroke and death. The influenza vaccine can help to protect against such events.

Influenza during pregnancy can give a somewhat increased risk of stillbirth. Pregnant women are also more susceptible to complications such as pneumonia than other healthy women.

Influenza in infants can be serious. Vaccinating the mother during pregnancy protects the child against influenza for 6 months after birth.

Every year, 5-15 per cent of the population has influenza. Research shows that many people are infected without displaying symptoms but they are infectious.
What does the vaccine protect against?
During the influenza season there may be 2-3 different strains of influenza virus in circulation. The seasonal influenza vaccine protects against the most common virus strains.

The vaccine will not protect against other viruses and bacteria that cause influenza-like symptoms.

Common influenza symptoms include fever, dry cough, runny nose, lethargy, headache and muscle pain for 3-10 days.

Why should the vaccine be given every year?
People in risk groups should have the vaccine each year because the effect of the vaccine decreases over time. Influenza viruses are also constantly mutating and the vaccine is adjusted to these changes every year.

Does the vaccine have side effects?
The seasonal influenza vaccine has been used for many years. As with other vaccines it may give local tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site, as well as fever, feeling slightly unwell and muscle pain. Allergic reactions or other serious side effects are extremely rare.

The seasonal influenza vaccine does not contain the same additives as the pandemic vaccine (Pandemrix).

The influenza vaccine cannot give you influenza.

Where can I get the influenza vaccine?
Contact your doctor or take advantage of vaccination days if they are arranged in your municipality.

Which vaccines have I taken?
You can ask to have your influenza vaccination registered in the National Immunisation Register (SYSVAK). More information can be found at: www.helsenorge.no/minevaksiner

Other questions?
More information about influenza and the influenza vaccine can be found on the Norwegian Institute of Public Health’s web site: www.fhi.no/influenza

You can also consult your doctor.

The influenza vaccine:
- results in fewer admissions to hospital
- protects against complications and permanently impaired health
- saves lives