



**Aboriginal
Health Council
of Western Australia**



FluMist Provider Resource

Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV)



Influenza virus

The Influenza virus (the flu) is a highly contagious virus that affects the upper and lower respiratory tract. It can cause mild to severe illness, especially in young children. It can be life threatening.

What is FluMist?

FluMist is a **live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV)** given as a **nasal spray** (intranasal), rather than an injection.

FluMist comes as a prefilled glass and plastic, single-use nasal applicator, no latex.

Each applicator contains a 0.2mL dose in a divided measure (0.1mL in each spray, for each nostril). There is a restrictive, dose divider clip on the plunger to guide the dose delivery.

It protects against three strains of seasonal influenza.



Who is eligible?

In Western Australia, FluMist is available for **children aged 2 to 11 years old** (no younger than 24 months and must be under 12 years old) and is fully funded by the WA State Government. This age group is prioritised because they are at high risk of complications from the influenza virus and readily spread it to others.

FluMist is **NOT suitable for children under 2 years old (24 months)**.

(Flumist is available for children 12 to 17 years old with an associated cost).



How many doses of FluMist LAIV?

As per the **Australian Immunisation Handbook**, a single dose of the LAIV FluMist vaccine is recommended for children aged 2 to 17 years old, even if they are receiving influenza vaccine for the first time.

Children aged 6 months to <9 years with medical risk conditions receiving influenza vaccine for the first time should receive 2 doses of influenza vaccine. A single dose is recommended in all subsequent years.

How does it work?

The intranasal solution starts an immune response beginning in the nasal mucosa, followed by systemic and cellular levels, building a strong response to fight future infection, in the first 2 weeks after administration.

It is quickly absorbed through the nasal mucosa due to the fine mist, and will work even if there is an immediate sneeze following administration.

Safety

The LAIV vaccination has been safely and effectively used in the northern hemisphere since 2003.

Common side effects

Generally mild:

- runny or stuffy nose
- mild fever
- fatigue
- loss of appetite
- generally feeling unwell
- headache



Provider training

Completion of the free online influenza immunisation education module is **mandatory** for WA immunisation providers working under Structured Administration and Supply Arrangement (SASA). The module has been updated to include information about LAIV.

How to administer LAIV (FluMist)

- 1 Remove the rubber tip protector. Do not remove dose-divider clip at the other end of the applicator
- 2 Nostril 1: Place the tip just inside the nostril to ensure the vaccine is delivered into the nose. With a single motion, depress the plunger as rapidly as possible until the dose-divider clip prevents you from going further. Active inhalation (i.e. sniffing) is not required by the patient during vaccine administration.
- 3 Prepare for next nostril: Pinch and remove the dose divider clip from plunger.
- 4 Nostril 2: Place the tip just inside the other nostril and with a single motion, depress plunger as rapidly as possible to deliver remaining vaccine.
- 5 Monitor for signs of severe reaction.

Contraindications and precautions

LAIV is contraindicated in children who:

- have had anaphylaxis after receiving a previous dose of any influenza vaccine
- have had anaphylaxis after receiving any component of an influenza vaccine
- are moderately and severely immunocompromised
- are taking oral salicylate therapy (e.g. aspirin)
- FluMist LAIV is NOT recommended for children receiving influenza vaccine for the first time after hematopoietic stem cell or solid organ transplant or CAR T-cell therapy

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends that all people with egg allergies, including those with a history of anaphylaxis, can receive an age-appropriate influenza vaccine. **ATAGI Statement - Influenza Vaccines in 2026.**

Needle-based influenza vaccines remain available for children who are not eligible for the nasal spray influenza vaccine or when the nasal spray influenza vaccine is not suitable or available.

Co-administration

LAIV can be given at the same time as any other vaccine, including live vaccines. **Refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook.**

Ordering

Ordering is through Onelink with pre-allocated amounts set.

FluMist has a short shelf life of 15 weeks. There will be no ongoing ordering of FluMist after the end of the flu program, even in areas where the flu season is all year round.

Storage

Keep FluMist in the original pack until it is time for it to be given, to protect it from light.

Store in a purpose-built vaccine fridge and maintain **Cold Chain Management**, as per Strive For 5 guidelines.

Documentation & reporting

AIR (Australian Immunisation Register)

Child Health purple book

Clinical record system

Report adverse events following usual processes including to WAVSS, using the SAFEVAC-WAVSS reporting guide.

Additional information

Australian Immunisation Handbook		SKAI	
ATAGI Clinical Advice		WA DoH	
AHCWA		NCIRS FAQ	

