



B.C. immunization group urges prevention ahead of influenza season

Non-profit organization Immunize.io Health Association is pushing for two additional flu vaccines to help reduce the impact of COVID-19 during the fall season

VANCOUVER, B.C. (September 9, 2020) – With COVID-19 expected to continue impacting public health in B.C., Immunize.io Health Association is advocating for better protection from the upcoming influenza season in the fall as it will most likely co-circulate alongside the global pandemic.

A [recent study from York University](#) shows that when community influenza vaccination rates increase to 90%, the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases will be reduced by 51.5% and cross-infected cases will be reduced by 91.4%.

“The healthcare system does not deal with prevention,” said Ajit Johal, Clinical Director and Pharmacist with Immunize.io. “You can show up and get a standard flu vaccine, but it’s always helpful to find out what vaccines are specifically best for you, in conjunction with your age and medical condition, as you also follow public health’s recommendation to fight COVID-19.”

Currently, B.C. residents can receive free vaccinations for the standard Influenza A and B strains at pharmacies, medical clinics, and public health units. However, the public can elect to pay for “enhanced protection” — which are not publicly funded — against influenza and other vaccine-preventable diseases, including two main options.

The **Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (QIIV)**, recommended for those from six months to 64 years old, provides protection against an extra B-strain of the influenza virus. The **High-Dose Trivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (HD-TIIV)** is recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) as the preferred option for those over 65 years old, and gives the body four-times more antigen to reduce their risk of influenza by about 25%. The two vaccines cost about \$25 for the QIIV and \$75 for the HD-TIIV.

“It’s about taking control and really knowing how you can better protect yourself,” Johal said. “Older adults suffer disproportionately from influenza, and this vaccine gives them a fighting chance during this difficult season.

“Since there’s a limit on the amount of HD-TIIV that B.C. receives, it’s better to plan in advance. With so much data and research done globally, this has consistently shown to provide better protection than the standard vaccine.”

For those looking for more information on which vaccine to get and which clinics provide it, they are encouraged to reach out and contact Immunize.io on their website (www.immunize.io) or on Facebook (www.facebook.com/immunize.io).

**About Immunize.io**

Immunize.io Health Association aims to take their "best shot" at immunizing the world by improving education and access to vaccination across B.C. The non-profit organization provides educational content, immunization consultation, and vaccination administration to improve health through prevention. Proceeds of immunization sales go towards donating vaccinations and essential service to under-developed countries.

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