



GUIDE

# The employer's guide to flu prevention.

Don't let flu hurt your people and your business.



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# Introduction

Seasonal influenza continues to affect employee health and workplace productivity across Canada. With many organizations now operating in hybrid environments, the effects of influenza are felt across both remote and in-person teams. The disruption caused by illness can interrupt day-to-day work and contribute to broader economic strain.

This resource supports employers, Human Resources professionals and Operations Managers in preparing for the upcoming flu season. Inside, you'll find:

Research findings on flu-related absenteeism and its effect on workforce performance

Workplace strategies proven to reduce flu transmission

Step-by-step guidance for preparing your teams and limiting seasonal disruption



# How flu hurts productivity.

Influenza can have a noticeable impact on your workforce. It doesn't wait for quieter periods, and once it spreads through a team, the effects can linger. In Canada, it contributes to an estimated 1.5 million lost workdays each year.<sup>1</sup> Canadian employees aged 50 to 64 take on average four days off due to the flu.<sup>2</sup>

Compared to other seasonal illnesses, such as the common cold, the flu tends to cause longer absences and slower recovery. Employees with symptoms often miss more time and may take longer to return to full capacity.

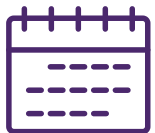
Research shows that vaccination plays a key role in reducing time lost to flu. Workers who receive a flu shot are less likely to get sick and, if they do, are typically off for fewer days.<sup>3</sup>

This can help reduce the need for temporary coverage, limit burnout among other staff and protect service levels during peak demand. A workplace prevention plan can help limit the impact of seasonal viruses. Taking early steps protects employee health and helps maintain productivity through the fall and winter.

## Know your facts on flu.



The flu is among the **top 10 leading causes of death** in Canada.<sup>4</sup>



Adults with the flu are off work from **1-5 days on average.**



**The power of flu vaccination:**  
Vaccinated adults lose less time at work, even when they do get sick.<sup>3</sup>

# How flu spreads and why vaccination matters.

Flu spreads when people release tiny respiratory droplets into the air by coughing, sneezing, talking or breathing. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, people can carry and share the virus before symptoms appear.<sup>4</sup> This makes early detection difficult and increases the risk of transmission in the workplace.

Even though rest, fluids, antiviral treatments and over-the-counter remedies can help ease symptoms, vaccination remains the best way to prevent illness and reduce the risk of serious complications for others.<sup>6</sup>

Because flu viruses change each year, health experts adjust the vaccine to match the strains most likely to circulate.

Protection also fades over time, which is why a yearly flu shot is recommended for everyone aged six months and older.<sup>7</sup>

Annual vaccination helps reduce unpredictability during peak illness periods. It gives your team added protection and supports stable operations when absenteeism can disrupt planning. Combined with hand hygiene and staying home when sick, these steps help protect employee wellbeing and limit flu spread at work.



# A step-by-step guide to prepare for flu season.

## STEP 1

### Plan early

Start your flu prevention strategy by late summer or early fall. Review last year's absenteeism to see how seasonal illness affected your team. Set a budget and research vaccination providers. Early booking often offers lower pricing and flexible scheduling. National guidance recommends flu shots once vaccines are available, usually aiming for October or early November. This timing helps build immunity before peak flu season from November to April.

## STEP 2

### Assess your workplace

Use a short survey to gauge interest in on-site flu vaccination and health screenings. Identify clinic locations that support smooth traffic flow and minimal disruption. If interest is high, consider adding screenings for heart disease and diabetes alongside flu shots.

## STEP 3

### Choose a vaccination program

Select a provider experienced in workplace flu campaigns. Confirm they supply quality vaccines, licensed nurses and coordinate your clinic. Check if they offer online booking and promotional materials to increase participation.

## STEP 4

### Launch your campaign

Begin internal communications early with emails, posters and FAQs. Share flu facts and how vaccination helps reduce absences at work. Highlight benefits for employees and their contacts. Target higher-risk groups and provide clear booking info and clinic details.

## STEP 5

### Run your clinic

Host your clinic in October or November with professional nurses. Use signage to keep the process organized. Provide vaccine information and track participation to measure success.

## STEP 6

### Follow-up and evaluate

After flu season, compare absenteeism to previous years. Gather employee feedback and review participation. Use results to improve next year's program.

# TELUS Health flu vaccination programs.

An efficient way to protect your team and your business.

Offering your employees a convenient way to receive a flu vaccine is a good way to help keep them healthy and productive all season long — and show them that their wellbeing is your top priority.



## 15 years of experience

Benefit from our team of coordinators and nurses, with years of experience planning, scheduling and executing flu campaigns for companies like yours.

## A dedicated coordinator

You receive end-to-end support on your campaign for maximum uptake, clear communication and a smooth process from start to finish.

## High-quality, timely vaccines

We purchase cell-based vaccines that offer strong protection and no egg ingredients. By ordering early, we ensure your team can get protection before flu season starts.

# Here's how it works.

We offer fully coordinated flu immunization campaigns. Our team will work with you to identify the dates, times and locations that work best for your team.

Learn more at

[telushealth.com/flu](https://telushealth.com/flu)



## Choose an immunization clinic.

Our team will help you decide on a location and immunization package that works for your organization.

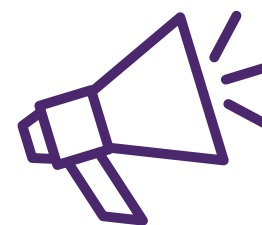
STEP 1



## Get ready to fill appointments.

We'll create a dedicated portal to help your employees book vaccine appointments online.

STEP 2



## Promote to your employees.

We provide you with promotional emails, posters and informative flyers about the upcoming clinic to share with your team.

STEP 3



## Host the clinic.

We ensure smooth operation of your clinic with the help of a guide and informative resources for your team about the vaccine.

STEP 4

# Sources

1. [Fraser Health. Influenza impact on workdays lost.](#)
2. [The impact of influenza on the ability to work, volunteer and provide care: results from an online survey of Canadian adults 50 years and older, BMC Public Health, 2022.](#)
3. [MDPI. Vaccination reduces flu absenteeism.](#)
4. Top 10 leading causes of death in Canada, 2023. Statistics Canada. March 2025. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250305/t001a-eng.htm>
5. Government of Canada. Epidemiology of influenza. [Public Health Agency of Canada.](#)
6. Government of Canada. Treating the flu. [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
7. Government of Canada. Get your flu shot. [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)



## About TELUS Health Care Centres

TELUS Health Care Centres helps improve health outcomes for Canadians through proactive occupational health services delivered at our 14 clinics and on work sites across the country. As part of the TELUS Health family, we're committed to innovation, collaboration and high-quality care. We're investing in new technology to support more effective preventive screening for employees and individuals.

Our clinical team includes experienced health professionals who deliver people-centred care. We're working to become one of the most trusted wellbeing organizations in the world.

## Discover our services

[telushealth.com/OccupationalHealth](https://telushealth.com/OccupationalHealth)