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## Flu Shots for Veterans

### Flu Shots

**2021-2022 Flu Season: Flu Shots Available September 15, 2021 - May 31, 2022**

It's never too early to start thinking about receiving your annual flu shot. A flu shot is a safe way to help protect yourself, and those around you, from getting sick and having complications from flu.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is especially important for all of us to do our part to help reduce the spread of the flu in our communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), you can even get a flu vaccine and a COVID-19 vaccine during the same visit. Review the CDC *Frequently Asked Questions about Influenza (Flu)* for more information.

Person receiving flu shot.

► [CDC Frequently Asked Influenza \(Flu\) Questions](#)

Beginning September 15, 2021, no-cost flu vaccines are available to eligible Veterans at more than 70,000 in-network community providers nationwide.

## Getting a Flu Vaccine: Four Steps

Step 1: [Check Eligibility](#)

Step 2: [Find Provider](#)

Step 3: [Go to Provider](#)

Step 4: Get Vaccine

### Eligibility

Community care flu shots are available to eligible Veterans who:

- Are enrolled in the VA health care system **AND**
- Received care through VA from either a VA or community provider within the past 24 months

**NOTE:** *Second requirement is new for 2021-2022 flu season.*

To check your eligibility, Veterans can:

Call 800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411), select option 1 (urgent care information), then select option 3 (urgent care information), and then option 1 again (to check urgent care eligibility).

**NOTE:** *The system will check your eligibility for the community urgent care benefit, which includes the flu vaccine.*

Contact your local VA medical facility.

Veterans can get a flu shot without prior authorization. Flu vaccines provided include standard (quadrivalent), high dose, and preservative-free.

**NOTE:** *Family members and beneficiaries are not eligible. State, age and health-related restrictions may apply. Individuals who are not eligible and receive a flu vaccine may be liable for the cost of the vaccine.*

### Network Providers

Eligible Veterans can choose from one of more than 70,000 in-network retail pharmacies and urgent care/walk-in locations to get their flu vaccine. The provider

must be part of VA's network.

- Retail pharmacies include most supermarkets and local pharmacies.
- Urgent care/walk-in locations include many local urgent care providers that offer walk-in care.

VA's network of flu vaccine providers is comprised of retail pharmacies and urgent care/walk-in locations that are managed by VA third party administrators (TPAs) Optum and TriWest. Optum manages Regions 1-3 and TriWest manages Regions 4-5 of the VA Community Care Network (CCN).

### ► [Community Care Network](#)

Flu vaccines are available in all regions of CCN, including Hawaii. Eligible Veterans located in Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands can receive a flu vaccine through local clinics operated by the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System.

Veterans who receive a flu vaccine from a non-network provider may be liable for the cost of the vaccine.

## **Find a Provider**

To find an in-network provider, use the VA Facility Locator. Enter the following information into the search tool:

- City, state or postal code: Enter the appropriate ZIP code for your area
- **Facility Type:** Select "*Urgent Care*" OR "*Community pharmacies (in VA's network)*"
  - If you select "*Urgent Care*," choose "*In-network community urgent care*"
- **Click "Search"**
- **Choose Provider.**

### ► [VA Facility Locator](#)

Veterans can also call (877) 881-7618 or their local VA medical facility for help locating an in-network provider.

## **Go to Provider**

Before going to the provider:

- Call ahead to make sure the provider offers the flu vaccine through this benefit.
- Print the *Billing Information Card* (or have it viewable on your mobile device) and take it with you to the provider.

When you arrive:

- Tell them you're a Veteran enrolled in VA health care, AND
- You would like to get a flu shot, paid for by VA.
- Show your government-issued ID and the *Billing Information Card*.

## **Copayments**

There is no copayment charge if your visit consists only of a flu vaccine. In addition, flu-vaccine only visits do not count towards visits and/or copayments associated with using VA's urgent care benefit.

## **More Information**

[Urgent Care Benefits](#)

[VA Community Care Copayments](#)

## **Documentation**

Documentation of the flu vaccination is sent to VA by the community provider to update the Veteran's medical record. Veterans can also request a copy of the documentation showing they received the flu vaccine.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Are the flu shots available at in-network retail pharmacies or urgent care locations the same as the ones offered at VA?**

It varies, but regardless of the manufacturer, the flu shot you receive at VA or an in-network, community retail pharmacy or urgent care location will help protect you from the flu.

### **What happens if an eligible Veteran is charged for a flu shot?**

Veterans should not pay the charge. Call (877) 881-7618 for assistance.

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