

Vaccines reduce influenza in the elderly

Clinical Question	How effective are vaccines against influenza in the elderly?
Bottom Line	Older adults receiving the influenza vaccine may have a lower risk of influenza (from 6% to 2.4%), and probably have a lower risk of influenza-like illness (ILI) compared with those who do not receive a vaccination over the course of a single influenza season (from 6% to 3.5%). It was uncertain how big a difference these vaccines would make across different seasons. Very few deaths occurred, and no data on hospitalisation were reported.
Caveat	There was not enough information to assess harms relating to fever and nausea in this population. The available evidence relating to complications was of poor quality, insufficient, or old and provided no clear guidance for public health regarding the safety, efficacy, or effectiveness of influenza vaccines for people aged 65 years or older.
Context	The consequences of influenza in the elderly (those age 65 years or older) are complications, hospitalisations, and death. The primary goal of influenza vaccination in the elderly is to reduce the risk of death among people who are most vulnerable.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Demicheli V et al. Vaccines for preventing influenza in the elderly. Cochrane Reviews, 2018, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD004876.DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004876.pub4. This review contains eight studies involving over 5,000 participants.

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Cochrane systematic review link: <http://cochranelibrary-wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD004876.pub4/full>