

VHA Office of Community Care

Seasonal Flu Shots

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Can I get my seasonal flu shot at my local Walgreens pharmacy?

A1. The availability of the Walgreens Retail Immunization Care Coordination Program partnership with VA ended in March 2020. Veterans can now receive their flu vaccination through a more robust community care program at more than 60,000 in-network locations.

There are Walgreens pharmacies that may be part of the Community Care Network (CCN) as an in-network retail pharmacy.

Q2. What is the Community Care Network?

A2. VA's Community Care Network (CCN) is comprised of six regional networks that cover U.S. states and territories. One of the components is in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care locations in communities. Eligible Veterans can receive no-cost seasonal flu shots at these locations.

Q3. How do I know if I am eligible to receive a flu shot through a retail pharmacy or urgent care location in my community?

A3. Retail pharmacies: Veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system.

Urgent care locations: Veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system and have received care from a VA or in-network community provider in the past 24 months.

To check eligibility, contact your local VA medical facility **OR** call 800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411), select option 1, and then select option 1 again.

Q4. How can the community in-network location verify if a Veteran is eligible?

A4. VA shares a file with the third-party administrators that contains a list of eligible Veterans. If the Veteran is enrolled in VA and is included in the eligibility file VA

Fighting The Flu Together!



Veterans, the location where you receive your no-cost flu shot may change this year!

Flu shots for enrolled Veterans

Choose from more than 60,000 community locations to get your **no-cost** flu shot.

Visit www.va.gov/communitycare/flushot.asp to find a current in-network location near you. Thousands of new sites available this year!

Veterans, present your government-issued ID to receive a no-cost flu shot at an in-network location.

#FightFlu



shares with the TPAs, the Veteran will be able to receive the flu shot by showing any government-issued ID. In-network locations can verify with their respective TPA if a Veteran is eligible.

Q5. Do I need to be treated for another urgent care-related ailment to get the flu shot?

A5. No. Eligible Veterans can receive stand-alone, no-cost flu shots at an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care location.

Q6. Will I have to pay a copayment for the flu shot?

A6. Eligible Veterans whose visits to an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent locations that consists of only a flu shot do not incur a copayment.

Q7. What type of flu shot can I receive at an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care location?

A7. VA will pay for standard dose (quadrivalent) and high-dose flu shots.



Q8. Do I need an authorization referral from VA to get a flu shot at an in-network community retail pharmacy or urgent care location?

A8. No. Eligible Veterans do not require a VA referral. However, eligible Veterans are required to present a government-issued identification (e.g. Veterans Health Identification Card or valid driver's license) to receive a flu shot at no cost.

Q9. How do I locate an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care location near me?

A9. Veterans who live in CCN Regions 1 – 5 can locate an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care location near them at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>.

Veterans can find in-network locations in their area by entering:

- The appropriate ZIP code

Urgent Care:

- Facility Type select Urgent Care
- Service type select Community urgent care providers (in VA's network)

CCN Pharmacies:

- Facility Type select Community pharmacies (in VA's network)

Veterans who live in CCN Region 6 can receive a flu shot through the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System's clinic in Guam, and at flu shot clinics in the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa.

For full information about where to obtain a flu shot at in-network community locations, visit <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/flushot.asp>.

Q10. If I don't meet the eligibility requirements, but get a flu shot at an in-network retail pharmacy or urgent care location, or I go to an out-of-network location, will I incur a cost?

A10. If an ineligible Veteran gets a flu shot at an in-network community location, or an eligible Veteran gets a flu shot at an out-of-network location, they may be liable for the cost of the flu shot.

Q11. Does getting my flu shot at a community care urgent care location count towards the no-copayment visits during the calendar year?

A.11. Flu shot-only visits to in-network urgent care locations do not count toward the first-three visits per calendar year that determines copayment rates based upon the number of visits and Veteran's priority group (https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/revenue_ops/copays.asp).

Q12. Does the flu vaccine cause the flu?

A12. No. The flu vaccine is a highly recommended step that helps you to reduce the potential of contracting the flu and can reduce the severity and length of symptoms if you were to be affected with the flu.

Q13. Why should I get the flu shot?

A13. It reduces the chances of getting the flu or severity of complications. There is a well-documented risk of flu in vulnerable populations: residents and employees at long-term care facilities, elderly, those with underlying conditions, and under-served groups such as African Americans and Hispanics. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone over the age of 2 get an annual flu vaccine.

Q14. Does the flu shot protect me if I was exposed to COVID-19?

A14. Higher seasonal flu vaccination rates in the elderly (65 years and older) correlated with fewer deaths from COVID-19, according to an epidemiologic study¹. In addition to getting the flu shot, following physical distancing guidelines and wearing a facemask can help reduce exposure to COVID-19 and the seasonal flu².

Q15. When is the flu shot available through community locations?

A15. The seasonal flu shot is available between Sept. 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021.

¹ Journal of Medical Virology <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jmv.26120>

² Journal of American Medicine <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2764657>