

Repeated influenza vaccination helps prevent severe flu in older adults

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Repeated vaccination for influenza in older adults reduced the severity of the virus and reduced hospital admissions, found new research published in *CMAJ (Canadian Medical Association Journal)*

A team of Spanish researchers looked at the effect of repeated [influenza](#) vaccinations in the current and 3 previous seasons in people aged 65 years and older admitted to 20 Spanish hospitals in 2013/14 and 2014/15 to determine whether repeat vaccination reduced severe influenza.

They found repeated influenza vaccination was twice as effective in preventing severe influenza in people admitted to hospital for the virus, compared with nonsevere cases, and that this effect was consistent regardless of flu [season](#), virus subtypes or age of patient.

"Repeated vaccination for influenza was highly effective in preventing severe and fatal infection caused by influenza in older adults," write Dr. Itziar Casado and Dr. Jesús Castilla, Instituto de Salud Pública de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain, with coauthors.

The study adds to findings from previous research that shows influenza vaccination reduces severity of the illness.

"Because severe cases of influenza may be prevented by 2 mechanisms, the effectiveness of vaccination against severe influenza may be greater than that for mild [cases](#), and the benefit of influenza vaccination may be greater than that estimated in previous studies. The prevention of severe

and [fatal infection](#) caused by influenza was observed mainly in patients who were vaccinated in both the current and previous seasons, which reinforces the recommendation of annual vaccination for influenza in older adults," the authors conclude.

More information: Itziar Casado et al. Repeated influenza vaccination for preventing severe and fatal influenza infection in older adults: a multicentre case–control study, *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (2018). [DOI: 10.1503/cmaj.170910](https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.170910)

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