



As the cooler months of the year approach, it's time to think about preparing for winter and reminding patients to protect themselves by getting their annual Flu Vaccine.

Influenza (the flu) is a common viral infection that affects people of all ages. While it may be a mild disease for some, it can also cause serious sickness and may even lead to hospitalisation, even in healthy people. Getting an Influenza vaccine every year from a health professional, is the safest and most effective way to protect yourself and others from influenza.

Did you know that in 2025 in NSW there were more than 25,000 cases of influenza in children under 5?

The flu changes every year, so the Influenza vaccine changes too. This is why you need an Influenza vaccine each year.

The NSW Government has introduced in April this year the Nasal Spray Flu vaccine which is available to eligible groups. The type of vaccine you get depends on your age and health and your Doctor will tell you which one is right for you or your child.

Eligibility for the Nasal Spray Flu vaccine (FluMist)

- Government Funded (free) under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for children aged 2, 3 and 4 years old
- Children aged 5 and 17 years will be required to pay a **private fee of \$60.00** at the practice for the cost of the vaccine.

Contradictions and Precautions

Intranasal vaccine is contraindicated (i.e. must not be given) for people who:

- had anaphylaxis after receiving a previous dose of any influenza vaccine
- had anaphylaxis after receiving any component of an influenza vaccine
- are moderately and severely immunocompromised
- are taking oral salicylate therapy (e.g. aspirin).

The following people should receive Intranasal vaccine with caution (noting it is only registered for children aged 2 to less than 18 years):

- pregnant or breastfeeding women
- close contacts of people who are severely immunocompromised should avoid direct contact for 1–2 weeks after receiving Intranasal vaccine
- individuals with a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome where the first episode occurred within 6 weeks of receiving an influenza vaccination
- individuals receiving more than one immune checkpoint inhibitors for cancer treatment who may have at higher risk of immune-related adverse events following influenza vaccination.

Further information can be found at <https://ncirs.org.au/influenza/influenza-vaccines-frequently-asked-questions-faqs> or check with your GP.

Eligibility for the Flu Vaccine

Free via the National Immunisation Program (NIP):

- Children: All children aged 6 months to less than 5 years are eligible, either as FluMist for 2-4 year olds or usual FluVax immunisation via injection
- Adults aged 65 and over
- Medical Risk Groups: Individuals 6 months and older with high-risk conditions, including chronic heart disease, severe asthma, chronic lung disease, diabetes, or weakened immune systems.
- Pregnant Women: at any stage of pregnancy.
- Indigenous Australians: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and older.



Patients who are not eligible for the free flu vaccination can be vaccinated in our practice at a cost of \$20.00 for the injectable vaccine or \$60.00 for the FluMist (for those aged 5-17ys).

The flu vaccines have arrived and we encourage patients to [book into our Flu clinics](#) which have commenced at both Terrigal and Avoca Beach Medical Centres. Due to the high volume of calls we receive, we kindly ask patients not to contact the practice for updates regarding flu vaccine availability. Please book an appointment for your Flu vaccine via the [Terrigal Medical Centre website](#).

An Update on RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common, highly contagious virus that infects the airways and lungs usually with symptoms of a "common cold" such as runny nose, sore throat, cough, sneezing, fever. RSV spreads between people when an infected person produces small water droplets while talking, coughing or sneezing. The droplets can be inhaled by others or land on surfaces where the virus can live for several hours. Young infants, young children, older Australians and those who are more at risk to respiratory infections, are more prone to serious infection with RSV.

Vaccination is a safe and effective way to protect against serious disease caused by RSV.

Who should get protected against RSV?

Anyone who wants to protect themselves against RSV can talk to your GP about getting vaccinated.

RSV vaccination is recommended for **specific groups** of people including:

- pregnant women at 28 to 36 weeks of pregnancy
- people aged 75 years and older and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 60 years and older
- people with medical risk factors for severe RSV disease aged 60 years and older.

RSV monoclonal antibodies are recommended for:

- young infants up to 8 months of age whose mothers did not receive RSV vaccine in pregnancy, or who were vaccinated less than 2 weeks before delivery
- young infants up to 8 months of age who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease, regardless of their mother's vaccination status
- children aged 8 months to under 2 years who have medical risk factors for severe RSV disease in their second RSV season.

Exciting news: From 15 May 2026, RSV vaccines will be funded through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) - i.e. the vaccine will be available at no charge, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 60 years and over and adults aged 75 years and over. Terrigal & Avoca Beach Medical Centres already have the RSV National Immunisation Program funded vaccine for all pregnant women, and in the latter part of May we will have and provide the RSV vaccine for ATSI people aged 60 and over and adults aged 75 years and over.

There are no RSV vaccines funded through the National Immunisation Program for people with **medical** risk conditions at this time however anyone who is not eligible for a NIP funded RSV vaccine, can purchase RSV vaccines privately and our GPs can provide a prescription to you for this to be dispensed at your pharmacy of choice and we can then vaccinate you.

Possible side effects of RSV vaccination

RSV vaccines or monoclonal antibodies should not be given to people who have had [anaphylaxis](#) after a previous dose of the same RSV vaccine or product or [anaphylaxis](#) after any component of an RSV vaccine or product.

You may experience minor side effects following vaccination. Most reactions are mild and only last a couple of days and you will recover without any problems. Common side effects of RSV vaccines include pain and redness at the injection site; fatigue; headache; muscle pains.

If you have any questions or requests for the vaccine please make an appointment with your GP.

Skin Check Awareness

Melanoma March is a national awareness campaign held each year to highlight the importance of early detection and prevention of skin cancer. Even though the month of March has now come and gone, our risks for melanoma remain high. The campaign encourages people to become more aware of changes in their skin, protect themselves from harmful UV exposure, and book regular professional skin checks. We remind our community that a quick check could make a life-saving difference.



Many skin cancers develop without obvious symptoms, which means regular checks are essential for early detection. Patients can book an appointment with their GP to have a full skin examination and discuss any spots or moles they may be concerned about. Your GP can assess any changes and recommend further treatment if needed.

Booking a skin check today provides peace of mind because when it comes to skin cancers, early detection truly matters.

For more information head to <https://melanomamarch.org.au/> or <https://www.cancerouncil.com.au/cancer-prevention/sun-protection/preventing-skin-cancer/>

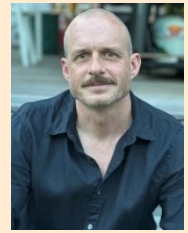
Avoca Beach Medical Centre – Onsite Pathology

We're pleased to announce that onsite pathology services with Lavery Pathology are now available at the Avoca Beach Medical Centre currently staffed on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30am – 1:30pm.

No appointment is necessary — walk-ins are welcome. This will provide added convenience for patients requiring blood tests and other pathology services.



We're delighted to share that Dr Marguerite Thomas and Dr Matthew Knapman have settled into the Terrigal & Avoca Beach Medical Centres and are consulting with both new and existing patients.



Appointments for all of our doctors are available and can be conveniently booked online via our website or through our practice App called AMSCONNECT (details are on the [website](#)).

Patients can also call the Terrigal Medical Centre on 43853150 or the Avoca Beach Medical Centre on 43821585.

Reminders.....

Repeat Scripts/Repeat Referrals

Patients are now able to request a repeat prescription or referral online (located via Online Bookings under the "Repeat Scripts" or "Repeat Referrals" tab). Note that not all Drs offer this service through these tabs.

These services are available through your regular GP only, who will review your request. If your GP feels that the repeat script can be done without further review, it will be sent via e-Scripts. A requested referral will be sent via email to the specialist with a copy to your email (if on file). Your GP may deny either request if further clinical review is required, in which case you will be notified.

The cost is \$30.00 for a script or \$40.00 for a referral, for which there is no Medicare rebate. You will not be charged if the script or referral cannot be done.

Please note that prescriptions requiring special authority or involving certain regulated (schedule) medications cannot be issued through this service.

Opening Hours

Terrigal Medical Centre	Avoca Beach Medical Centre
<p>Monday to Friday:</p> <p>Doors open: 8:30am – 6:00pm</p> <p>Phones: 8am – 1:00pm, 2:00pm – 5:00pm</p>	<p>Monday to Friday:</p> <p>Doors open: 8:30am – 5:00pm</p> <p>Phones: 8:30am – 1:00pm, 2:00pm – 5:00pm</p>
<p>Saturdays & Public Holidays:</p> <p>8:30am – 1:00pm</p> <p><i>Hours may vary – please check the website for updates</i></p>	<p>Saturdays & Public Holidays:</p> <p>CLOSED</p>

Staff Farewell

In January this year we farewelled Wendy Konsti, a long-standing staff member of the Terrigal & Avoca Beach Medical Centres. After 14 years as a receptionist, Wendy has retired and is now enjoying a well-earned break, spending time with family and friends.

Wendy was a valued member of our team and will be greatly missed by both staff and patients alike.



Thank you for reading our Autumn newsletter - stay tuned for the next issue!