Each year, between 290,000 and 650,000 people die from flu-related respiratory causes.

**The disease**

- The Flu (influenza) is a viral infection that primarily affects the nose, throat, bronchi and occasionally the lungs.
- Most people recover in one to two weeks without the need for medical treatment.
- However, for children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with subjacent illnesses, the flu can lead to serious complications, cause pneumonia or result in death.

**Transmission**

- The virus is easily transmitted from person to person by droplets and small particles expelled by coughing or sneezing at distances of less than 1 meter.
- Influenza usually spreads rapidly in seasonal epidemics.

**Symptoms**

- Sudden high fever
- Muscle aches and pains
- Headache
- Significant general malaise
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Congestion

**Vaccines**

Annual vaccination is the most effective and safest way to protect against influenza and serious complications in at-risk groups.

**Calendar**

1 dose each year at the beginning of the flu season for

- Pregnant women, throughout pregnancy
- Older adults
- People with underlying illnesses
- Health care workers

2 doses at least 4 weeks apart for children from 6 months of age.

For more information, visit: www.paho.org/immunization