

Frequently asked questions

SWICA offers a workplace flu prevention and immunity-boosting campaign together with its network partners. You can find answers to frequently asked questions here.

Why does SWICA offer a comprehensive workplace flu prevention and immunity-boosting campaign?

An effective workplace flu and cold prevention campaign should combine medical prevention, individual immunity boosting and behavioural expertise. The combination of administering flu vaccinations, supplying micronutrients and providing education cover precisely those three evidence-based leveraging factors, and has an impact on both health levels and finances.

1. Flu vaccination = “basic cover”

Vaccination is currently held to be the most important measure for preventing serious illness and complications. Getting vaccinated helps combat active waves of disease.

2. Preventive immunity package with vitamin D and zinc = “biological resilience”

Vitamin D has a regulatory effect on immune cells and inflammation processes, and studies show that taking vitamin D supplements can reduce the risk of respiratory infections by around 10% to 20%, particularly in cases of vitamin D deficiency. It is commonly known that many central Europeans don't get enough vitamin D, particularly in the winter. Zinc is essential for the cellular immune response and anti-viral defence. The evidence shows that it reduces the duration of colds and boosts immune function. The preventive immunity package including supplements is no substitute for vaccinations, but it does play a useful role in prevention.

3. “Healthy immune system” webinar and follow-up text messages = “behavioural change and sustainability”

Educational prevention webinars in the workplace promote self-efficacy and taking responsibility for personal health in a targeted manner, and provide impetus for lasting changes in behaviour. Content relating to nutrition, sleep, stress management and exercise addresses the main factors that influence the immune system. The webinar boosts the impact of the other components, and ensures a long-term culture of health at the company.

Is the seasonal flu vaccination suitable for my company?

On-site flu vaccinations are generally a good idea for companies with 200 or more employees. Flu vaccination is only recommended for groups of at least 45 people, as it takes at least half a day.

The voucher variant involving pharmacies is suitable for both large and small companies. SWICA and its partners cover almost the whole of Switzerland.

Experience in recent years has shown that between 15% and 20% of employees get vaccinated (depending on the sector). We would be happy to advise you in this regard.

For which sectors/companies is the seasonal flu vaccination particularly recommended?

- Health and social sectors
- Childcare
- Old-age care
- Sectors with frequent customer contact

How many vaccinations do I need for my company?

There are no official studies on vaccination rates at companies. Internal analyses conducted by SWICA show that around 15% of employees at insured companies get vaccinated. In some sectors, including pharmaceuticals and chemicals, the vaccination rate is 20%.

How much does on-site flu vaccination cost?

SWICA offers on-site vaccination as a half-day or full-day service with a maximum of two vaccination stations. Companies buy a fixed number of vaccine doses. It is not possible to charge for the actual number of vaccine doses used. All of the costs of the workplace flu vaccination campaign are paid for by the companies. It is not possible to charge employees for the costs.

You will find details of the half-day and full-day flat rates in the overview of prices on the website. We would be happy to provide you with a quote.

What does the flu vaccination with pharmacy vouchers cost?

Our partners (Coop Vitality, Amavita and Sun Store) offers the vaccination for 44.90 francs per dose. SWICA charges a one-off management fee of 600 francs for organisation and coordination.

Which companies is the combined on-site/pharmacy vaccination offer suitable for?

The offer is suitable for companies with a large head office and additional small sites spread around Switzerland.

Does workplace flu vaccination make sense for my company?

Employees who fall ill with flu are generally absent from work for between seven and ten days, depending on the severity of the illness. According to the Federal Statistical Office, these types of absences cost between 830 and 1800 francs per day (2022), depending on the sector. The absence of one employee for eight days would therefore cost between 6640 and 14400 francs. Preventing just a few employees from falling ill with seasonal flu would therefore already cover the cost of the workplace flu vaccination programme.

What are the key considerations for companies conducting a flu vaccination programme for the first time?

Employees tend to be reluctant to take part the first time, which is why it's important to ensure that communications are targeted and clear. Employees must not get the feeling that they are being patronised.

They should see the programme as a voluntary offer of assistance from their employer. In order to determine the level of demand and interest, we recommend that companies conduct a brief survey before implementing the vaccination programme for the first time. Given the fact that employees are increasingly working from home, the vaccination arrangements have to be planned accordingly (for example over multiple half days).

How can companies promote the campaign?

SWICA provides companies with communication tools such as posters, text modules, mailing materials, etc. that they can use for internal channels. Word-of-mouth promotion is also important. Managers are effective multipliers (e.g. in team meetings).

What vaccine is used?

The flu vaccine consists of fragments of flu viruses from three or four different virus strains. Because the viruses mutate, the vaccine for the autumn will be modified in line with the latest WHO advice.

The vaccines contain inactivated components of the type A viruses H1N1 and H3N2 as well as type B viruses, water, preservation/stabilisation additives and residual traces of chicken egg proteins or aminoglycoside antibiotics. As a rule, seasonal flu vaccines are produced in the traditional way using a chicken egg culture. They are inactivated, which means that they cannot cause flu. Flu vaccines approved for use in Switzerland do not contain mercury or aluminium compounds.

Our network partners use the VaxigripTetra® vaccine. This is a quadrivalent vaccine that contains inactivated fragments of a second B strain in addition to the components of the trivalent vaccine.

(Source: www.impfengegengrippe.ch)

Are there any contraindications to the flu vaccine?

The vaccine is contraindicated if the individual has had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock) to a vaccine component during a previous flu vaccination. In addition, the vaccine should not be given to individuals who are known to have a strong allergic reaction to chicken protein. Administration of the vaccine is usually postponed in the case of individuals with a high fever, as this may reduce the level of protection offered by the vaccine. Flu vaccination is safe during pregnancy and breastfeeding, however, and is in fact recommended for the protection of both mother and child.

(Source: www.impfengegengrippe.ch)

Can our employees who receive a voucher for the preventive immunity package use it for other items from the pharmacy?

No. The voucher can only be redeemed for vitamin D and zinc supplements up to a value of 30 francs.

What vitamin D and zinc supplements can be obtained at the pharmacy?

Before redeeming the voucher, a brief consultation takes place at the pharmacy and the employee receives an individual recommendation.