

**2003  
2004**

# Flu Vaccination

**Flu  
Season**

Much of the illness and death caused by the flu can be prevented by a yearly flu shot. People in high-risk groups and people who are in close contact with those at high risk should get a flu shot every year. Influenza, or the flu, is generally not dangerous, but complications from the infection can be. The flu vaccine (a flu shot), creates an immunity to the flu and protects you against the flu. The flu shot is made from inactivated viruses (the viruses are killed), and **experts consider the flu shots safe**. Make an appointment for Flu Vaccination and Consultation today.

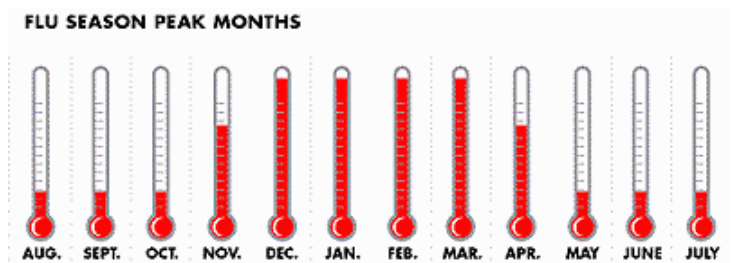
**Who Should Get a Flu Shot?** Some people who get the flu become seriously ill and need to be hospitalized. Some people even die from illnesses related to the flu. That's why it's important for you and your doctor to determine whether your family needs the flu vaccine.

- **Adults and children (> 6 months) who want to avoid the flu**
- Adults and children (> 6 months) with chronic heart or lung conditions & asthma
- Adults and children (> 6 months) who need regular medical care or had to be in a hospital because of metabolic diseases (like diabetes), chronic kidney disease, or weakened immune system
- Persons 50 years or older
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- Children and teenagers (6 months to 18 years) who are on long-term aspirin therapy
- Women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during the flu season
- Persons who provide important community services (such as police, fire department personnel, emergency medical services, doctors, nurses and hospital workers).

The flu vaccine reduces the average person's chances of catching the flu by up to 80% during the season. For healthy young adults, the flu shot reduces the risk of getting the flu by up to 90%. Even if an immunized person gets the flu, symptoms usually will be fewer and milder.

**Is the Flu Vaccine Safe During Pregnancy & While Breastfeeding?** Pregnancy can increase the risk for complications from the flu, and pregnant women are more likely to be hospitalized from complications of the flu than non-pregnant women of the same age. Women who will be beyond the first 3 months of pregnancy during the flu season should get a flu shot. Pregnant women who have medical problems that increase their risk for complications from the flu should get a flu shot before the flu season, no matter their stage of pregnancy. Also, it is safe to get a flu shot if you are breastfeeding. A flu shot cannot cause flu in either you or your baby.

**When Should You Get a Flu Shot?** We are now offering the flu vaccine, and recommend getting vaccinated between September and mid-November (but you may be given the vaccine at other times of the year). Flu season is from November to April, with most cases occurring between late December and early March.



**The Vaccine Does Not Cause the Flu.** A common myth about the flu shot is that it can actually cause the flu. But the flu vaccine in the United States is made from killed influenza viruses, which means that it's impossible to catch the flu by getting this vaccine. Each year, the vaccine is updated to include the most current strains of the virus. After getting a flu shot, a person's body will create antibodies to fight the virus if exposed to it. Antibodies against flu develop and provide protection within 1 or 2 weeks after vaccination.

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