

# Common questions about the flu

**Is the flu shot safe? Yes.** Since the 1950s, safe and effective vaccines have protected people from the flu. The seasonal vaccine is manufactured each year based on the strains that have been circulating globally and are predicted to be the most common during the flu season. The vaccine stimulates the immune system to mount a response to the virus. **It is a “killed” vaccine and CANNOT cause the flu.**

**Can I get the flu from the vaccine? No.** The vaccine is made from inactivated viruses and cannot cause flu. It takes about two weeks after the shot for antibodies to develop that protect you.

**What if I have allergies or reactions?** **Most people can get the flu shot.** Those who should not are people with a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome within six weeks of a previous dose of flu vaccine. People with a severe egg allergy can get the egg-free Flublok vaccine. Common **reactions tend to be mild and last 1–2 days: low-grade fever, aches and soreness around the injection site.**

**What if the vaccine doesn't cover all flu strains?** Although the vaccine may not be perfect for the major virus strains circulating each year, **getting the shot still provides some protection.** That means people who are vaccinated and later get the flu are less likely to have severe complications.

**I've never had the flu, so why get the shot?** Even if you don't have flu symptoms, **you might be a carrier and spread the disease to others.** Flu strains are constantly changing, so even if you have not had flu in the past, **it does not mean you are immune from this year's strain(s).** You could have a subclinical case (meaning you have the flu virus but do NOT have signs of illness), which means you can unknowingly pass the virus on to those who may be at high risk for complications.

**Can I get the flu shot if I have a chronic condition (such as diabetes, cancer, etc.)? Yes.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) specifically recommends that the vaccine should be given annually to all adults at risk for complications from the flu or more likely to need healthcare, such as adults with chronic conditions. The CDC recommends that high-risk groups and people who care for them (such as medical workers) get an annual shot to protect against flu outbreaks.

**Can I get the flu shot if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding? Yes.** The CDC and The American College of OB/GYN urge all pregnant or breastfeeding women get the shot to protect both mom and baby.

**Can I get the flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine at the same visit? Yes.** A waiting period is not needed. Note: *Those awaiting test results for COVID-19 cannot get a flu shot. The CDC recommends that anyone with COVID-19 wait at least 10 days after a positive test result before getting the flu shot.*

**Does the flu vaccine increase my risk of getting COVID-19? There is no evidence** that getting a flu shot increases the risk of getting COVID-19. Because flu and COVID-19 can have similar symptoms, it is possible to have both illnesses at once, so getting a flu shot is more important than ever.