



Key Facts About Seasonal Flu Vaccine

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year.

There are two types of vaccines:

- The “flu shot” — an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.
- The **nasal-spray flu vaccine** — a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that is given as a nasal spray (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine”). The viruses in the nasal spray vaccine do not cause the flu. LAIV is approved for use in healthy* people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

Seasonal flu vaccines protect against the three influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season. The viruses in the vaccine can change each year based on international surveillance and scientists’ estimations about which types and strains of viruses will circulate in a given year. About 2 weeks after vaccination, antibodies that provide protection against the influenza viruses in the vaccine develop in the body.

When to Get Vaccinated

CDC recommends that people get their seasonal flu vaccine as soon as vaccine becomes available in their community. Vaccination before December is best since this timing ensures that protective antibodies are in place before flu activity is typically at its highest. CDC continues to encourage people to get vaccinated throughout the flu season, which can begin as early as October and last as late as May. Over the course of the flu season, many different influenza viruses can circulate at different times and in different places. As long as flu viruses are still spreading in the community, vaccination can provide protective benefit.

Who Should Get Vaccinated

While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it’s especially important that the following groups get vaccinated either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Health care workers
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

Vaccine Effectiveness

The ability of a flu vaccine to protect a person depends on the age and health status of the person getting the vaccine, and the similarity or “match” between the viruses or virus in the vaccine and those in circulation. For more information about vaccine effectiveness see [How Well Do Flu Vaccines Work?](#)

Vaccine Side Effects (What to Expect)

Different side effects can be associated with the flu shot. The viruses in the flu shot are killed (inactivated), so you cannot get the flu from a flu shot. Some minor side effects that could occur are:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given
- Fever (low grade)
- Aches

If these problems occur, they begin soon after the shot and usually last 1 to 2 days. Almost all people who receive influenza vaccine have no serious problems from it. However, on rare occasions, flu vaccination can cause serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions.

The nasal spray (also called LAIV or FluMist®): The viruses in the nasal-spray vaccine are weakened and do not cause severe symptoms often associated with influenza illness. In children, side effects from LAIV (FluMist®) can include:

- runny nose
- wheezing

- headache
- vomiting
- muscle aches
- fever

In adults, side effects from LAIV (FluMist®) can include

- runny nose
- headache
- sore throat
- cough

Public Chapter 687 requires that Department of Human Services and the Department of Health to work together to educate the parents of children in child care agencies regarding the importance of immunizing their children against influenza. The Department of Human Services works with child care agencies to ensure that this information is distributed annually to parents in August or September.

I/We acknowledge that we received information on the importance of immunizing children against influenza.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

Signature of Agency Representative

Date