

Healthy Habits to Help Prevent Flu

What to Know This Flu Season

It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter.

The tips and resources below will help you learn about actions you can take to protect yourself and others from flu and help stop the spread of germs.

1.

1. **Avoid close contact.**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. **Stay home when you are sick.**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.

3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu and other serious respiratory illnesses, like respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), whooping cough, and COVID-19, are spread by cough, sneezing, or unclean hands.

4. **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. **Practice other good health habits.**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Preventing Flu at School

- Find out about plans your child's school, child care program, or college has if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
- Make sure your child's school, child care program, or college routinely cleans frequently touched objects and surfaces, and that they have a good supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes on-site.
- Ask how sick students and staff are separated from others and who will care for them until they can go home.

The **single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get** vaccinated each year, but good health habits like avoiding people who are sick, covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent flu.

Influenza (Flu) Shot

People who can get the flu shot:

- Different flu shots are approved for people of different ages. Everyone should get a vaccine that is appropriate for their age.
- There are inactivated influenza vaccines (IIV) that are approved for people as young as 6 months of age.
- Some vaccines are only approved for adults. For example, the recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV) is approved for people aged 18 years and older, and the adjuvanted and high-dose inactivated vaccines are approved for people aged 65 years and older.
- Pregnant women and people with certain chronic health conditions can get a flu shot.
- Most people with [egg allergy](#) can get a flu shot.

People who SHOULD NOT get the flu shot:

- Children younger than 6 months of age are too young to get a flu shot.
- People with severe, life-threatening allergies to flu vaccine or any ingredient in the vaccine. This might include gelatin, antibiotics, or other ingredients.

People who should talk to their health care provider before getting a flu shot:

If you have one of the following conditions, talk with your health care provider. He or she can help decide whether vaccination is right for you, and select the best vaccine for your situation:

- If you have an allergy to eggs or any of the ingredients in the vaccine. Talk to your doctor about your allergy.
- If you ever had Guillain-Barré Syndrome (a severe paralyzing illness, also called GBS). Some people with a history of GBS should not get a flu vaccine. Talk to your doctor about your GBS history.
- If you are not feeling well, talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm>