



## **FLU SEASON IS UPON US**

Flu season is back, are you ready?

*October 19, 2020*

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### **Is it really that important to get a flu shot this year?**

Getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever this year to protect yourself, and your family as it is likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter.

A flu vaccine can help reduce the overall impact of respiratory illnesses, and hospitalizations on the population therefore reduce the burden on the healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses<sup>1</sup>.

Vaccination of high-risk individuals is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. Those at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with certain chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and those 65 years and older.

### **How can you tell the difference between the flu and the cold?**

Although the flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses, they are caused by different viruses. Since these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be tough to tell the difference based on symptoms alone.

In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms tend to be more intense<sup>2</sup>. Those with a cold, may experience milder symptoms and are more likely to just have a runny or stuffy nose. Flu

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symptoms however can include fever, a sore throat, cough, runny nose, body aches, headaches and fatigue, to name a few.

Colds normally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations, whereas the flu can have very serious related complications.

### **How can you prevent the spread of germs?**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. It really works!
  
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces daily.
- If you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

The CDC recommends getting a flu vaccination in September or October but getting vaccinated anytime during the flu season can help protect you. Take time, get a flu vaccine.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/prevention.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/prevention.htm)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/coldflu.htm>

[Administering Vaccine Instructions](#)

[Administering Vaccine Instructions for Infants and Toddlers](#)