



# Plain Language: The Flu Shot

## What is the flu shot?

The flu shot is a vaccine that helps your body defend itself against viruses. Vaccines help your body protect against certain viruses and diseases. Flu shots contain the same germs that cause the flu, but the germs are very weak so they don't make you sick. Flu shots help you not get the flu and help protect others near you not get the flu.



## Why is it important to get the flu shot?

Flu is an illness that passes from one person to another. You could get it easily if you do not get a flu shot. Some people who have the flu will only get a little sick, but other people who have the flu may feel very sick and need to get medical help in a hospital. Getting a flu shot can help you from getting very sick from the flu, and even help stop you from getting the flu. When you get a flu shot you are protecting yourself and others because you are less likely to pass the flu virus to someone else.



## Who should get the flu shot?

Anyone over 6 months and older should get a flu shot. Many people with disabilities may have [health conditions](#) that make it easier for them to get the flu or get very sick from the flu. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the same people with disabilities who are at higher risk for getting really sick from the flu are *also* at higher risk for getting seriously sick from COVID-19. It is important that all people with disabilities, their families, and people who work with people with disabilities get their flu shot to protect themselves and the people near them.



## Where can I get the flu shot?

Flu shots are offered in many doctor's offices, urgent care clinics, pharmacies, health departments, and even in schools and businesses. You can use [VaccineFinder](#) to find where to get a flu shot near you.



## How will I get the flu shot?

A flu shot gives you the vaccine using a needle in your arm. It is a very quick and easy way to get the flu vaccine. After some people get the flu shot, their arm might be a little red or hurt. That is normal and will go away. Some people will get the flu vaccine using a spray in their nose. Ask your doctor if a flu shot or spray is best for you.



## When should you get the flu shot?

You should get a flu shot in the Fall, before the end of October. Lots of people get the flu between October and May, so it is easier for you to get the flu then. It is okay if you did not get the flu shot yet. It is still available and important to get at any time in the flu season.



## Flu Shot Facts

### 1. The flu shot is safe to get.

The flu shot and other vaccines are safe to get. All vaccines have to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before they are made available. The flu vaccine has one of the best safety records of any vaccine.



### 2. The flu shot cannot give you the flu.

The flu shot contains very weak flu germs that cannot cause you to become sick. You may feel a little sick right after you get the vaccine, but that is a sign that your body's immune system is working.

### 3. The flu shot does not cause autism.

There is no evidence that any vaccine, including the flu vaccine, causes autism spectrum disorder or is related to autism spectrum disorder. Learn more about this harmful myth on the [CDC website](#).

### 4. Vaccines like the flu shot help you stay healthy.

Keeping clean, drinking clean water, and eating healthy food will help you stay healthy. However, research shows that vaccines are better at protecting yourself and others.

### 5. You need to get the flu shot every year.

To protect yourself and others from the flu, you must get the flu shot every year. Different types of flu vaccines are in the shots every year to protect against flu viruses most common that year.

## Action steps:

1. **Get your flu shot today!** To find out where you can get your flu shot, go to: <https://vaccinefinder.org/find-vaccine>



2. To learn more about the **symptoms of the flu**, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/index.html>

3. To learn more about **people at high risk** for getting seriously sick from flu, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm>

4. To learn more about how to **protect yourself** from the flu, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm>