

## Why do I need to get a flu vaccine every year?

You should get vaccinated every year as soon as the vaccine is available because:



- The protection you get from the vaccine lasts throughout the flu season.
- The flu vaccine is updated each year to include the viruses expected to be the most common during the upcoming flu season. Although the vaccine isn't 100 percent effective it is your best protection against flu.
- People who get the flu vaccine may still get sick, but are likely to have a milder or shorter illness.

## How do I know flu vaccine is safe?

- The flu vaccine has been used safely for over 70 years.
- About 100 million doses are given in the United States each year to protect people during flu season. Serious side effects are extremely rare.
- Vaccines are extensively tested and continuously monitored for safety and effectiveness every year.
- Flu vaccination is recommended and trusted by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and clinics worldwide.

## Find out more.

For more information, visit: [www.doh.wa.gov/flu](http://www.doh.wa.gov/flu)

For help finding an immunization clinic, call:

WithinReach

WithinReach Family Health Hotline  
**1-800-322-2588** (711 TTY relay)  
or [www.ParentHelp123.org](http://www.ParentHelp123.org)



If you have a disability and need this document in another format, please call 1-800-322-2588 (711-TTY relay).

Protect  
your family  
from the

# flu



## Influenza (flu) vaccine

is the best way to protect yourself, your family, and your community from the flu. Call your doctor today for an appointment or visit your local pharmacy.





**Flu** spreads easily by coughing and sneezing. Flu most often causes fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and headache. Flu can also lead to hospitalization and death. This is especially true for babies, young children, pregnant women,

older adults, and people with certain medical conditions. In the United States, flu is the leading cause of death from a disease that can be prevented through immunization. Unfortunately, babies who are younger than six months are unable to receive this vaccine.

**EVEN HEALTHY PEOPLE CAN GET VERY SICK FROM THE FLU. PEOPLE CAN SPREAD IT TO OTHERS BEFORE THEY KNOW THEY'RE SICK.** Getting vaccinated each year is the best way to protect yourself from getting and spreading the flu.

## Who should get the flu vaccine?

### EVERYONE SIX MONTHS AND OLDER

Those who are at high risk, such as:

- Anyone with asthma, diabetes, heart disease, lung diseases, or other chronic illnesses.
- Pregnant women and women who recently gave birth.
- Adults 65 and older.
- Caregivers or households with:
  - Older adults.
  - Those with a weakened immune system.



## How many doses of flu vaccine do I need?

The flu vaccine protects you all season long, but children younger than nine may need two doses in the same flu season. Ask your doctor or nurse if your child will need two doses this season and what vaccine options are available.

## Flu vaccine does NOT cause the flu

Some people may feel slightly feverish or achy for one to two days while their immune system responds to the vaccine. This is not the flu; it's a sign the vaccine is working! It takes about two weeks after vaccination to be protected. Until that time you'll still be at risk of getting the flu if you're exposed to the virus and you could even spread it to others.

## Healthy habits help stop the spread of flu!

- Get vaccinated each year!
- Cover your cough! Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your upper sleeve, NOT your bare hand. Be sure to throw the tissue away.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water is not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces in your home, such as countertops, faucets, and doorknobs.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Call your doctor or nurse if you have a fever or cough that won't go away.
- Stay home and away from other people when you or your children are sick.



**Get vaccinated. Stop the flu.**