

Flu Vaccine Myths & Facts

Myth

"The flu isn't a serious disease."

FACT

Influenza (flu) is a serious disease of the nose, throat, and lungs, that can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 36,000 people die because of the flu. Most people who die due to flu complications are 65 years and older.

Myth

"You must get the flu vaccine before December."

FACT

The best time to get a flu shot is October or November. But you can get vaccinated in December or later. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.

Myth

"The flu shot does not work."

FACT

Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies, the effectiveness of the flu shot has ranged from 70% to 90% when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. Getting the flu shot is your best protection against this disease.

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Get A Flu Shot!

**Call the HCPH Patient
Appointment Call Center at
(713) 212-6800**

**Antoine Health Clinic
5815 Antoine, Suite A
Houston, TX 77091**

**Baytown Health Clinic
1000 Lee Dr.
Baytown, TX 77520**

**Humble Health Clinic
1730 Humble Place Dr.
Humble, TX 77338**

**Southeast Health Clinic
3737 Red Bluff
Pasadena, TX 77502**



Protect Yourself Against The Flu



Harris County
Public Health
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What is the flu (influenza)?

The flu is a highly contagious disease that is caused by the influenza virus which infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat and lungs). Each year about 36,000 people in the U.S. die because of the flu.

A flu vaccine is needed every year because flu viruses are constantly changing. The flu vaccine is formulated each year to keep up with the flu viruses as they change.

How does the flu spread?

The flu spreads easily from one person to another. When an infected person coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets containing the flu virus are released into the air. When you inhale these droplets you can become infected with the flu (this is also known as "droplet spread"). A person can also catch the flu by touching an object that has infected droplets on it and then touching their own nose or mouth before washing their hands.

Who should get the flu vaccine?

- ◆ Everyone six months of age and older should get vaccinated against the flu each year.
- ◆ People who are 50 years old or older. Even if you are active and in good health, you have a higher risk of complications if you get the flu. Influenza can lead to pneumonia and can be dangerous for people with heart or breathing conditions. So, in addition to the flu shot, the pneumococcal vaccine is also recommended for people 65 years and older.
- ◆ People with chronic (ongoing) or long-term health problems. You may look and feel healthy, but if you have a condition like diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, or asthma, you are more likely to have complications from the flu. If your immune system is weakened by long-term problems like cancer or HIV/AIDS, you need a flu shot (the flu shot is safe for people with weak immune systems). Ask your doctor if you need the pneumococcal vaccine.
- ◆ Women who are pregnant during flu season. Pregnant women are at risk of complications and hospitalization if they get the flu. The influenza vaccine is safe for pregnant women and their babies. Protect yourself and your baby by getting vaccinated.
- ◆ People who care for or live with children younger than 6 months should be vaccinated to protect these babies.

- ◆ Vaccination also is important for healthcare workers, and those who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading the flu.

What are the flu symptoms?

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ Chills
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Cough
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Muscle aches

How can I stop spreading germs?

- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- ◆ Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ◆ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- ◆ Avoid close contact with sick people.
- ◆ Stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading flu to others.

