



October 11, 2021

## 6 Reasons to Get a Flu Vaccine

This year, it's even more important to get a flu vaccine. Here are six reasons why, according to the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center:

1 - COVID-19 has strained the healthcare system, making it more difficult to get necessary care when sick. This is especially true in rural areas where access to healthcare can be limited or far away.

2 - If you work with swine, the flu vaccine is especially important. Humans can give the flu to swine and vice versa.

3 - Even if you do get the flu, it will likely be much less severe with the flu vaccine, as is true with the COVID vaccine offering safety of a less severe version of that illness, if contracted.

4 - Almost everyone aged 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) features a list of those at risk who should consult a physician before getting a flu vaccine. Just type into their search bar "People who are at higher risk of flu complications" for that list.

5 - Getting the flu vaccine protects your community, including those who can't get the shot and are most vulnerable. The flu shot doesn't protect against COVID, but it does reduce your chance of getting the flu.

6 - The flu vaccine protects you from four different versions of the influenza virus, which is why you should still get the vaccine even if you've had the flu.

Every year, I remind readers that a flu vaccine cannot give someone the flu. It is impossible because the injected dead or disabled virus serves only as a template for future live viruses that might enter the body. Bodies are intelligent enough to see that foreign "template of flu" as a threat and create antibodies to defend against it if or when the actual live virus is later a real threat. Any feeling of illness soon after the shot means that your body is working hard to create a defense system, or the flu virus had already entered prior to the shot. As always, consult your physician for how it may affect you.

Remember that it takes up to two weeks for antibodies to “kick in”. It is not an immediate cure. It is recommended that those with any kind of illness should not get the flu vaccine, as this could prolong recovery of other illnesses.

For the 2021-2022 flu season, three main types of influenza vaccines are available, according to the CDC. Two kinds—the inactivated influenza vaccines (IIV4s) and the recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4)—are injectable (flu shots). The third type, the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4), is given by nasal spray. Different influenza vaccines are approved for different age groups. Some people (for example, pregnant people and people with some chronic health conditions) should not get some types of flu vaccines, and some people should not receive flu vaccines at all (though this is uncommon). Everyone who is vaccinated should receive a vaccine that is appropriate for their age and health status. There is no preference for any one vaccine over another.

Wishing you good health this fall and winter season!

*Source:*

[http://umash.umn.edu/spotlight-six-reasons-you-should-get-the-flu-shot-this-year/?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=newsletter](http://umash.umn.edu/spotlight-six-reasons-you-should-get-the-flu-shot-this-year/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=newsletter) and [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).