

Myth: The flu shot gives me the flu.

NO. This is medically impossible. The injectable flu shot is either an inactivated (“dead”) version of the flu virus, or it is just a single gene and not the whole virus. Therefore, it cannot infect your body and replicate as the actual flu virus can. The nasal spray flu vaccine is a live, but weakened, version of the virus so it also is not able to infect your body. The virus in the nasal spray is also “cold-adapted,” meaning it cannot infect your lungs where warmer temperatures exist.

Myth: The flu shot always makes me sick with the flu.

This can happen for several reasons.

1. You were infected with something **before** you got the shot, and just happened to start showing symptoms after the shot.
2. You are infected with a virus that causes a cold, and you do not actually have influenza. (Though it may feel like it!)
3. You are experiencing side effects of the flu vaccine that you are mistaking as actual infection. These symptoms are usually more mild and short-term than being sick with the actual flu. Common side effects to the flu vaccine are:
 - a. Soreness or redness at the injection site
 - b. Headache
 - c. Fever
 - d. Nausea
 - e. Muscle aches

Myth: I have an egg allergy so I can't get the flu shot.

This is not necessarily true. The CDC says that if you only break out in hives after eating eggs or egg-containing foods, you are able to receive any licensed flu vaccine appropriate to your age and health status. If your egg allergy is more severe than hives, you should talk to your health care provider.

Myth: Flu disease is not serious, so I don't need a shot.

Flu can be a serious disease, particularly among young children, older adults, and people with certain chronic health conditions, such as asthma, heart disease or diabetes. Any flu infection can carry a risk of serious complications, hospitalization or death, even among otherwise healthy children and adults. Therefore, getting vaccinated is a safer choice than risking illness to obtain immune protection.

Myth: You need the flu vaccine every year because it doesn't work well.

A person's immune protection from flu vaccination declines over time, so an annual vaccination is needed to get the "optimal" or best protection against the flu during the time of year when the flu is at its peak. CDC conducts studies each year to determine how well the influenza (flu) vaccine protects against flu illness. While vaccine effectiveness (VE) can vary, recent studies show that flu vaccination reduces the risk of flu illness by between 40% and 60% among the overall population during seasons when most circulating flu viruses are well-matched to the flu vaccine. While determining how well a flu vaccine works is challenging, in general, recent studies have supported the conclusion that flu vaccination benefits public health.

Myth: I'm young and healthy so I don't need the flu shot. I never get sick!

Every day is a new day and a new opportunity to come into contact with an infectious disease and get sick. While we applaud your strong immune system (and we're sure you're also frequently washing your hands and covering your coughs and sneezes!) there is no guarantee you will never get sick.

Flu vaccines are important for young, healthy people for several reasons:

1. Getting the flu shot can help shorten the severity and duration of the flu if you do end up getting sick. A 2018 study showed that from 2012 to 2015, flu vaccination among adults reduced the risk of being admitted to an intensive care unit (ICU) with flu by 82 percent.
2. Vaccinating yourself helps protect those around you that you care about: your elderly grandparents, your diabetic mom, your baby niece.
3. You can be out in public with people who don't seem sick, but actually are infected and are infectious to others. This is because flu has a short "incubation" period where a person is infected and are spreading it to others but has not developed symptoms yet. People can also be infected with the virus but not showing symptoms.

For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>