

Frequently Asked Questions – The Flu Vaccine

Is there more than one flu vaccine this year?

Every year, the Center for Disease Control monitors what the most common causes of flu are in the world. The common causes of the flu vary each year. The CDC then works with the manufacturers of vaccines to make sure that what they make will fight the most common causes of the flu.

There are two types of flu vaccine this year. The first is the seasonal flu vaccine and the second is the H1N1 (Swine Flu) vaccine.

Do I need to get the flu vaccine?

People of any age can get the flu. Some people can have serious illness that requires they be hospitalized and in severe cases the flu can cause death. Getting both the seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccines this year is the best way to decrease the chances that you will get the flu.

When should I get the flu vaccine?

You should get both the H1N1 and seasonal flu as soon as it is available. Flu vaccine will be delivered to public health departments and health care providers as it is made. Both public health departments and health care providers will make people who are part of high-risk groups a priority for getting the vaccines. High-risk groups include the following:

H1N1 Flu

- Health care providers;
- Pregnant women;
- People who live with or provide care for infants younger than 6 months (e.g., parents, siblings, and day care providers);
- People 6 months through 24 years of age; and
- People 25 years through 64 years of age who have chronic illnesses like diabetes.

Seasonal Flu

- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday;
- Pregnant women;
- People 50 years of age and older;
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions;
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities;
- Health care workers; and
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:

Who Should Not get any flu vaccine?

There are some people who should not get any flu vaccine without first consulting their doctor. These people include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs;
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination;
- People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine previously;
- Children younger than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for this age group); and
- People who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated.)