



Seasonal Flu Vaccination

Categories : [Health Issues](#)

An annual seasonal flu shot vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community. Influenza viruses typically circulate from late fall through early Spring.

What is Influenza (also called Flu)?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death, especially with adults over 65, children younger than 2 years old, pregnant women, and those with chronic medical conditions. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

Signs and Symptoms of Flu

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these signs and symptoms that usually start suddenly, not gradually:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in young children than in adults.

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

Who Should Get the Vaccine and When?

CDC advises routine annual influenza vaccinations for all persons aged 6 months and older who do not have contraindications. Optimally, vaccination should occur before onset of influenza activity in the community. Health care providers should offer vaccination by October, if possible. Vaccination should continue to be offered as long as influenza viruses are circulating. Children aged 6 months through 8 years who require 2 doses (see "Vaccine Dose Considerations for Children Aged 6 Months through 8 Years") should receive their first dose as soon as possible after vaccine becomes available, and the second dose 4 weeks later. To avoid missed opportunities for vaccination, providers should offer vaccination to unvaccinated persons aged 6 months during routine health care visits and hospitalizations when vaccine is available.

For more information the CDC's Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines website, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

For information on FluBlok, the vaccine to protect people with egg allergies against the flu, can find information on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/qa_flublok-vaccine.htm



If You Are Looking for a Flu Vaccine:

Check with your usual health care provider for availability of influenza vaccinations or contact the CT Department of Public Health Immunization Program at 860-509-7929, Monday-Friday 8:30 AM-4:30 PM for help finding a community provider of influenza vaccinations; or, go to the following site to find a provider: <http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/influenza/find-a-flu-shot.html>

For More Information About the Seasonal Flu:

- Connecticut Department of Public Health – Seasonal Flu Facts:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Immunizations/Seasonal-Influenza>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Spanish)
<http://espanol.cdc.gov/enes/flu/>
- National Library of Medicine and the National Institute of Health (Medline Plus)
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/flu.html>

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