



Washtenaw County
Health Department

FLU SEASON MYTH BUSTING



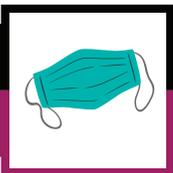
Prevent the Flu



Get Vaccinated



Wash Hands Often



Wear A Face
Covering



Avoid Contact with
Sick People



Always Cover Your
Cough or Sneeze

Q&A

■ Is the flu virus really harmful?

Yes, the flu can be dangerous. Especially during the **COVID-19** pandemic. A flu vaccine is effective at preventing serious illness or death. It may not prevent you from getting a milder case of flu. It is even more important to get the flu vaccine this year to lessen the risk of having **COVID-19** and the flu at the same time.

■ Do I need to get vaccinated every year?

Yes. A yearly flu vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older. The reason for this is that a person's immune protection from vaccination declines over time, so an annual vaccination is needed to get the best protection against the flu. Additionally, flu viruses are constantly changing, so the vaccine is updated as needed based on which influenza viruses are making people sick.

■ Will the flu vaccine make me sick?

No, the vaccine cannot cause actual flu. The most common reactions people have to flu vaccines are considerably less severe than the symptoms caused by actual flu illness. You should still vaccinate.

The most common side effects from flu shots are soreness, redness, tenderness or swelling where the shot was given. Slight fever, headache and muscle aches also may occur. If these reactions occur, they usually begin soon after vaccination and last 1-2 days.



Q&A Cont.

■ **Will getting a flu vaccine make me more susceptible to other respiratory viruses?**

No. Flu vaccines are not thought to make people more susceptible to other respiratory infections.

■ **Can I get a flu vaccine while pregnant?**

Yes. Pregnant women should get a flu shot and not the nasal spray flu vaccine. Flu shots given during pregnancy help protect both the mother and the baby from flu. Vaccination has been shown to reduce the risk of flu-associated acute respiratory infection in pregnant women by up to one-half.

■ **Is it too late to get vaccinated after Thanksgiving (or the end of November)?**

No. As long as the virus is still circulating in your community, a vaccine can provide protection about two weeks after you get it. Flu often circulates locally through early or late spring.

■ **Can vaccinating twice provide added protection?**

No. Only one dose of flu vaccine is recommended each season. The only exception is that some children 6 months to 8 years may require two doses.

■ **Is it better to get sick with flu virus than to get a flu vaccine?**

No. The flu can be a serious disease, particularly among young children, older adults, and people with certain chronic health conditions. Any flu infection can carry a risk of serious complications, hospitalization or death.