

The Flu Shot



Myths & Facts

MYTH	FACT
<p>I didn't get a flu shot last year and I didn't get sick. Obviously, I don't need a flu shot.</p>	<p>Getting the flu shot every year is recommended because the virus that gives you influenza changes every year. The flu shot vaccine and its ingredients change every year to combat the current virus.</p>
<p>I'm young and healthy. The flu is just a bad cold; I don't need a flu shot.</p>	<p>Influenza is more serious than a cold. Even young healthy adults can become seriously ill. People with influenza are sick in bed for up to five days, causing them to lose time from work or vacation. You might also infect others who are at much higher risk than you - young children, the elderly, or someone with health problems.</p>
<p>Getting a flu shot will give me influenza</p>	<p>This is NOT TRUE. The vaccine does not contain live virus so you cannot get influenza from the flu shot. Many people confuse influenza with a cold or another respiratory infection. The vaccine will not protect you against colds or other respiratory infections. The flu shot only provides protection against influenza.</p>
<p>Flu shots are not worth getting because they are not very effective anyway.</p>	<p>A flu shot is about 70-90% effective in preventing illness in healthy adults. In children, it is about 50-80% effective in preventing influenza and has been shown to reduce severe ear infections in young children by up to 36%. Among the elderly, the vaccine can prevent pneumonia and hospitalization in about 6 out of 10 people. Protection from the flu shot vaccine develops about one to two weeks after the shot, and may last for up to one year. Vaccine effectiveness varies from person to person, depending on their state of health; some individuals who get the flu shot may still get influenza. But, if they do, it is usually a milder case than it would have been without the flu shot.</p>
<p>I don't need another flu shot. I've already been vaccinated.</p>	<p>A flu shot is needed every year. There are many different strains of influenza virus. The strains change yearly and each year a new vaccine is produced that provides protection against the three most common strains predicted for the coming season.</p>