

COVID-19 and the Flu

As we enter flu season, it is more important than ever to get your flu shot this year. Below is information on the importance of getting your flu shot, who should be getting flu shots, when you should get it, and where it is available.

Why is the flu shot so important this year?

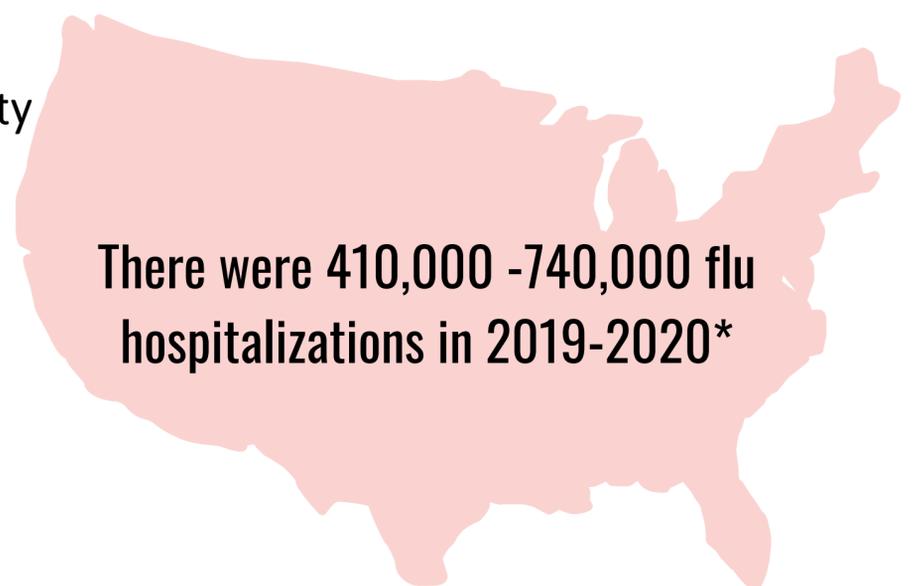
The symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are very similar:



Getting the flu can leave you more vulnerable to COVID-19, and those who are already at risk for getting respiratory diseases could face more severe cases. It is especially important to get the flu shot this year because if you do get sick with one of these lung illnesses this fall, it could help reduce the severity of your symptoms.

What are the benefits of getting the flu shot?

- ✓ Protect you, your family, neighbors, and community
- ✓ May help you avoid COVID-19 exposure from doctor offices or hospitals
- ✓ Decreased severity of flu symptoms and lower hospitalization risk
- ✓ Help hospital workers save resources and redirect them to those infected with coronavirus



*Data source: CDC

How does the flu shot work?

The flu vaccine introduces an inactivated or weak version of the virus to your body, which causes your immune system to produce protection against it. You may sometimes have mild symptoms after receiving the flu vaccine; this is your body developing its response to the inactivated or weakened virus. When you are actually exposed to the virus, your body can fight it off or reduce its impact so you only experience mild symptoms.

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Who should get the flu shot?

Everyone over six months old should get the flu shot. It's especially important for high risk groups to receive a flu shot. These groups include:



Those with underlying illnesses like asthma, heart disease, or COPD

65+ Older adults



Caretakers exposed to vulnerable groups



Pregnant women



Essential workers

When should you get the flu shot?

Most drugstores in the U.S. now have the flu vaccine in stock. However, experts suggest waiting until September or October so the vaccine protection lasts the whole flu season. This is especially important for adults over 65 and those with compromised immune systems. There is a special flu vaccine for adults 65 years and older with a higher dosage that protects against four strains of the flu, so make sure to talk to your healthcare provider about the options that are available to you.

Where is the flu shot available?

Rite Aid, CVS, and Walgreens all have the vaccine in stock, and most other drugstores have begun offering the vaccine. Doctors' offices also offer the vaccine but be sure to call your healthcare provider ahead of time to make sure they have the flu shot in stock. You can also visit [vaccinefinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org) for more vaccine locations.

What is the cost of the flu shot?

For those with private insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid, the shot is usually free or comes with a low co-payment.

For those without insurance, the cost for the regular shot is \$40.99 at Walgreens and \$39.99 at CVS and Rite Aid.

The uninsured cost of the high-dose vaccine for those 65 and older is \$69.99 at CVS and Rite Aid and \$72.99 at Walgreens.