

The Flu Shot

Every year more than 36,000 people in the U.S. die from the **flu**. In fact, complications from the **flu** send more than 225,000 people to the hospital every year.

What is the flu?

The **flu** (influenza) is one of the most severe illnesses of the winter season. It spreads easily from one person to the next and causes fever, chills, cough, sore throat, muscle aches and fatigue. The **flu** can be life-threatening, especially for older adults.

The #1 way to protect yourself and others from the flu is by getting vaccinated.

You will not get the flu from being vaccinated.

You should get vaccinated against **flu** if you:

- Are 50 years of age or older
- Have chronic heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease or diabetes
- Have a weakened immune system, caused by medicines, HIV, or AIDS
- Have any condition that makes it hard to breathe or swallow
- Are a woman who will be pregnant during flu season
- Live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Are a health care worker
- Live with someone who has chronic heart, lung, kidney disease, diabetes, a weakened immune system or a condition that makes it hard to breathe or swallow
- Live or care for children younger than 5 years of age or adults older than 50



When you get the flu shot your skin might be sore or red where the needle went in. You might also have some fever and aches.

After vaccination, it takes about 2 weeks for you to have protection from the **flu**.

Talk with your health care team about when they will be giving **flu** shots.