



## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT FLU VACCINATION

### Why is it important for health care workers to get the flu vaccine each year?

As a health care provider (HCP), you have an increased risk of exposure to flu viruses and are more likely to spread illness to vulnerable patients in your care. By getting vaccinated, you can help protect your patients, family, and coworkers.

To help prevent the spread of flu, a state law was passed in 2020 that requires employees at hospitals, nursing homes, and home health agencies to get a flu vaccine.\*



### I thought last flu season was mild, so why do I need to get the vaccine this year?

While social distancing and wearing masks might have kept the 2021-2022 flu season milder than pre-pandemic levels, cases are expected to rise this year as some of the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Flu vaccination is the best way to prevent the flu.

### I never get sick with the flu; why should I get vaccinated?

Even if you've never gotten the flu before, it doesn't mean that it won't happen in the future.

You may consider yourself healthy, but the flu can affect anyone. Flu can mean a few days of feeling bad and missing work, but it can also result in more serious illness.



\*P.L. 2019, c330 (N.J.S.A. 26: 2H-18.79) [pub.njleg.gov/bills/2018/PL19/330\\_.PDF](https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2018/PL19/330_.PDF)

## How well does the flu vaccine work?

While vaccine effectiveness can vary, recent studies show that vaccination reduces the risk of flu illness by between 40% and 60% when most circulating flu viruses are well-matched to those used to make flu vaccines. Vaccination may not provide 100% protection, but some protection is much better than none.

## What are the vaccine side effects?

Side effects, if any, are usually limited and relatively mild. Possible side effects may include soreness, redness, and/or swelling where the shot was given, headache, fever, nausea, muscle aches, and fatigue. Severe side effects are rare. The benefits of flu vaccination greatly outweigh possible side effects.

## Can I get a flu vaccine if I have an egg allergy?

People with egg allergies can receive any licensed, recommended, age-appropriate flu vaccine that is otherwise appropriate. People who have a history of severe egg allergy should be vaccinated in a medical setting, supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic reactions. Alternatively, you can receive an egg-free vaccine at any location.



## Can I get the flu vaccine at the same time as the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, it is recommended that you receive the flu and COVID-19 vaccine (including the updated COVID-19 booster) at the same time. By getting vaccinated, health care workers can help to reduce the overall burden of these respiratory illnesses and conserve health care resources for patient care.

## Is flu vaccine safe?

Flu vaccines have a good safety record. Hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines.

## Can the flu vaccine cause flu illness?

No, flu vaccines cannot cause flu illness. No matter what type of flu vaccine you receive, none of them can cause you to get the flu. Some people may develop flu-like symptoms after getting vaccinated, which is most likely an indication that the vaccine is working.

NJ Department of Health: [nj.gov/health/cd/topics/flu.shtml](https://nj.gov/health/cd/topics/flu.shtml)  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [cdc.gov/flu](https://cdc.gov/flu)

