



Getting Your Annual Flu Vaccine

Annual flu vaccines are safe and recommended to everyone 6 months and older

- Most people just need one annual flu vaccine to protect themselves against severe illness from the flu.
- Children 6 months through 8 years getting a flu vaccine for the first time, or who have only previously gotten one dose of flu vaccine, should get two doses of vaccine. If your child needs two doses, work with your provider to get the first dose before the fall season. That way you will have time to get your child fully vaccinated before flu activity increases in the fall.
- Some people are at higher risk of severe illness from the flu. This includes: adults age 65 and older, children under 5 years old, pregnant people and people with underlying medical conditions (like lung disease, heart disease, or a weakened immune system).

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What types of flu vaccines are available?

Injectable

For people 6 months to 64 years old, there are no recommendations for one brand of flu vaccine over another. All flu vaccines for 2023-24 protect against four strains of the influenza virus. The vaccine composition is updated every year to match the most current circulating strains.

Nasal spray

This is a live attenuated vaccine (LAIV), approved for people age 2 years to 49 years. This vaccine type is not recommended for pregnant people, immunocompromised people, older adults and people with certain medical injuries.

High dose and adjuvanted

These vaccines create a stronger immune response. This vaccine type is recommended for adults age 65 and older.

When is the best time to get a flu vaccine?

It is best to get the flu vaccine by the end of October each year. Getting vaccinated later is still beneficial, even if flu activity has already begun. This is because the flu can occur year-round.

Can I get the flu from a flu vaccine?

Flu vaccines cannot cause flu. The vaccines either contain inactivated virus that is no longer infectious, or a particle designed to appear like a flu virus to your immune system. While the nasal spray flu vaccine does contain a live virus, the viruses are changed so that they cannot give you the flu.

How much does a flu vaccine cost?

The cost of a flu vaccine may vary. Most insurances cover the cost of a flu vaccine. If you are uninsured or underinsured, there are programs that can help you get a flu vaccine at low or no cost. Washington State provides flu vaccines for children through the age of 18 at no cost.

Can I get a flu vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes. It is safe to receive a flu vaccine at the same time as other vaccines. Please talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist about other vaccines you may need to be up to date.

Can I get the flu vaccine if I'm allergic to eggs?

People with egg allergy may receive any flu vaccine (egg based or non egg based) that is otherwise appropriate for their age and health status.

I'm pregnant. Can I get a flu vaccine?

Pregnant people can receive any licensed, recommended inactivated flu vaccine. The nasal spray vaccine is not recommended when you're pregnant. It is safe to get the flu vaccine at any stage before, during or after pregnancy. When pregnant people get vaccinated, they pass antibodies to their babies. This helps protect newborns from the flu for several months after birth, before they are old enough to get their own vaccine. Pregnant people are also recommended to receive COVID-19, Tdap, and RSV vaccines.

To learn more,
visit [FluFreeWA.org](https://www.flufreeWA.org)