

# Flu — Questions and Answers

## What is the flu?

Over the years, flu has become almost a generic term many people use when someone is tired with a fever or has an upset stomach. However, influenza is actually a contagious disease that can infect the nose, throat and lungs. About 200,000 people are hospitalized in the U.S. every year with the flu. Symptoms include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)

## Who should get a flu shot?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends anyone over the age of 6 months get a flu shot every year. Talk to your doctor if you have specific concerns or questions.

## Can the vaccine give me the flu?

No. The virus in the vaccine is dead and not able to infect you. However, it can come with fever, muscle aches, and/or fatigue as the body works to protect itself. Unlike the actual flu, these symptoms typically last only a few hours to a day or so and rarely limit someone's ability to function.

Note: The flu shot doesn't work right away. You are open to get the flu for some two weeks after you receive the shot.

## I never get the flu. Do I still need to get a flu shot?

Yes. By getting the flu shot, you are not only protecting yourself but also your family and friends. You can be a carrier and spread the disease without having any symptoms. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five to seven days after becoming sick.

## I had the flu shot last year. Do I need to get another one this year?

Yes. Your immune protection from the flu shot weakens over time, and the flu viruses change from one season to the next. To receive the best protection against the flu, you should get vaccinated every year.

[www.legacyhealth.org](http://www.legacyhealth.org)



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