

Myth: *You should wait to be vaccinated so your immunity to the flu will last all season.*

Fact: It takes two weeks after vaccination to develop antibodies and provide protection against the flu virus, so it is best to get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine is available, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Not only are you protected before the virus is present in your community, but your family stands a better chance of gaining immunity to various strains prevalent this year.

Myth: *You can get the flu from the flu vaccine.*

Fact: You cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine. The flu shot is inactivated and cannot cause infection. The nasal spray flu vaccine is “attenuated” or weakened and also cannot cause illness. The nasal flu spray is also “cold-adapted,” which means it allows the virus to replicate in the cooler nasal passages and cannot cause infection in the warmer temperature areas like the lungs or other parts of the body.

Myth: *If the viruses in the flu vaccine have not changed since last year, I do not need the flu shot this year.*

Fact: No, the CDC recommends just about everyone over the age of 6 months old be vaccinated each year against the flu. Our immunity does decline over time so the flu vaccine is recommended on an annual basis as this has shown to provide the best protection against the flu.

Myth: *I am healthy and isn't it better to get immunity from actually getting the illness?*

Fact: No. While the flu is particularly serious for young children, older adults and people with health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease, the flu can be deadly even among healthy individuals. The risk of complications, such as hospitalization and death, can be present for all. Each year up to 50,000 Americans die from influenza.

Myth: *If you have not gotten vaccinated by December, it is too late to get your flu shot.*

Fact: While it is important to note that the CDC does recommend getting vaccinated as soon as the vaccine is available, ideally by October, as long as the flu virus is still circulating in the community, it is NOT too late to be vaccinated.