

Get the facts. Not the flu.

flu fact (1)

A flu vaccine is your best way to prevent the flu.

It's true! And while a good diet, vitamins, chicken soup and exercise are good for you, they won't necessarily prevent you from getting the flu. A flu vaccine can do that. It's highly effective in preventing the flu and reduces the flu's severity should you contract it.

flu fact (2)

The flu is not a bad cold.

The real name for what we commonly call the flu is influenza- an infection of the airways in the lungs caused by the influenza virus. Some of its symptoms are cold-like, but are more serious: headache, chills and dry cough, followed rapidly by body aches and fever. Typically, the fever starts declining on the second or third day of the illness. It is then that the upper respiratory symptoms such as nasal congestion, sore throat and cough become noticeable.

flu fact (3)

The flu strikes up to 20% of Canadians and kills thousands yearly.

Flu-related illnesses result in increased hospitalization between the months of November and April. To make matters worse, flu viruses themselves are constantly changing, leading to radically different viruses which could erupt at any time. Very few people would be immune to these new strains. An example of this was the Hong Kong flu of 1968. The Spanish flu in 1918 reached worldwide epidemic proportions, killing an estimated 20 million people.

flu fact (4)

Easy to catch. Easy to spread.

The flu virus is easy to contract and easy to pass along. When someone who is infected with the flu coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets containing the flu virus pass through the air and can enter the body of an uninfected person through the mouth, eyes or nose. Symptoms tend to appear two to four days after infection. But even after the symptoms disappear, a person is still contagious for another three or four days.

flu fact (5)

The flu vaccine can't give you the flu.

In order for the flu vaccine to offer you protection, it must contain part of the flu virus itself - but the virus is dead. It cannot give you the flu. The modern day flu vaccine must meet very high standards. It is both exceptionally safe and extremely pure. It is the most effective way of preventing yourself from getting the flu.

flu fact (6)

The flu poses a greater risk if you're part of a high risk group.

If you are over sixty-five, live in a nursing home or chronic care facility, have chronic medical conditions including bronchitis, emphysema, heart disease, diabetes or kidney disease, then you are at risk of serious complications from the flu. Complications like pneumonia are greatly reduced with vaccination.

flu fact (7)

Vaccine side effects are relatively minor.

The most common side effect is soreness at the injection site, which is usually mild and should not interfere with your daily activities. Other less common side effects are headaches and

muscle pains. As a precaution, after being vaccinated you will be asked to remain at the clinic for 20 minutes. A flu vaccine may not be for you if you are allergic to eggs, as the vaccine contains trace amounts of egg protein. Consult your doctor.

flu fact (8)

Every year means new virus strains- and a new vaccination.

The flu vaccine is effective against three particular strains of flu. At the beginning of each year, the World Health Organization recommends the particular strains to be included in the vaccine for the upcoming flu season. Manufacturers then produce their vaccine to be effective against those strains. The vaccine can vary depending in what region of the world you live. You need a flu vaccine each year as it is customized for the upcoming flu season only.

flu fact (9)

November to April is flu season. Get vaccinated in time!

The vaccine provides you with short-lived immunity during the flu season of November to April. It then gradually diminishes in strength. In other words, you need to get vaccinated in time. It's your best protection against the flu - but do enjoy that apple a day!

Shire

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