The flu — myths vs. facts

The flu is only a temporary illness and has no long-term complications. **False:** Although the flu is a temporary illness for most people, it can have serious complications. During the 2019–2020 flu season, there were 410,000–740,000 flu-related hospitalizations and as many as 24,000 to 62,000 deaths. If you have chronic conditions or are 65 years and older, you have a much higher chance of developing complications.¹

I’m fairly young and healthy so the vaccine isn’t that important, right?  **False:** Even healthy people benefit from vaccination. You’ll be protecting yourself and your loved ones.

I might catch the flu from the flu vaccine.  **False:** Vaccines can not cause flu illness because they contain an inactive virus or virus particles. Some people may develop a low-grade fever that goes away within 1–2 days. They may mistakenly think they caught the flu when they are actually experiencing side effects.²

I already received the flu vaccine last year, so it isn’t necessary to get one again this year.  **False:** The circulating virus changes each year. Also, the protection you received from last year’s vaccination declines over time. To get the best protection, you should get a yearly vaccination.¹

It’s already December. It’s too late for me to get a flu shot.  **False:** Although the ideal time to get a vaccine is in the early fall, it’s never too late to get the vaccine.
Resources:


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