



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:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention . 2019-2020 US U.S. flu season: Preliminary burden estimates. [cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm). Accessed April 27, 2020.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Key facts about seasonal flu vaccine. [cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm). Accessed April 27, 2020.

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