

Department of Emergency Medicine

Influenza Vaccination

Why should people get vaccinated against the flu?

Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. Over a period of 31 seasons between 1976 and 2007, estimates of flu-associated deaths in the United States range from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people.

If you have asthma, COPD, are pregnant, or are over the age of 65, you are at higher risk!

While the vaccine is recommended for everyone, during recent flu seasons between 80% and 90% of flu related deaths have occurred in people 65 years and older. "Flu season" in the United States can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

During this time, flu viruses are circulating at higher levels in the U.S. population. An annual seasonal flu vaccine (either the flu shot or the nasal spray flu vaccine) is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. When more people get vaccinated against the flu, less flu can spread through that community.

Sounds Great! But how much does it cost?

If you have medicaid or other insurance through the **state of Ohio, it is free! \$0**

Pharmacies have contracts with insurance providers, completely covering the vaccination.

If you have insurance, simply visit your local pharmacy:

Kroger accepts most types of insurance except Paramount

Walgreens accepts most types of insurance including CareSource, Medicaid, and Buckeye

→ **but not Molina (if you have Molina, CVS is your preferred option)**

CVS accepts most types of insurance but not United Health Care

If you do not have insurance:

The vaccine costs \$31.99 at most pharmacies and \$20 at the public health department.

Additionally, there are some vouchers available through the health department.

For more info, call 513-357-7390.

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How do flu vaccines work?

Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses that are in the vaccine.

The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season.

Can the flu vaccine give me the flu?

No, a flu vaccine cannot cause flu illness. Flu vaccines that are made with either with a) flu vaccine viruses that have been 'inactivated' and are therefore not infectious, or b) with no flu vaccine viruses at all!. The nasal spray flu vaccine does contain live viruses. However, the viruses are weakened, and therefore cannot cause flu illness. While a flu vaccine cannot give you flu illness, there are different side effects that may be associated with getting a flu shot or a nasal spray flu vaccine. These side effects are mild and short-lasting, especially when compared to symptoms of bad case of flu. They may include soreness at the site, muscle aches, headache, and runny nose.

References

Cdc.gov,. 'Key Facts About Seasonal Flu Vaccines | Seasonal Influenza (Flu) | CDC'. N.p., 2015. Web. 1 Oct. 2015.