

What's New With The Flu?

October 27, 2016

Influenza is a respiratory infection that can cause serious complications, particularly to young children, older adults, and people with certain medical conditions. Flu shots are the most effective way to prevent influenza and its complications. The CDC recommends that everyone 6 months of age or older be vaccinated annually against the flu.

Though experts recommend the flu shot for everyone annually, there has been a lot of debate about the vaccine within the general public as well as a lot of questions. To assist you in making an informed decision, we, here at MyFace2FaceMD™, would like to answer some of the most common questions asked about the flu vaccine.

1. How does the flu vaccine work?

- Flu vaccines cause disease fighting proteins called antibodies to develop in the body to protect against infection with viruses that are in the vaccine.
- The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza virus that research has indicated will be the most common during the upcoming season.

2. When is the flu vaccine available?

- For the 2016-2017 season, shipments are likely to begin in July or August.
- Doctors and nurses are encouraged to begin vaccinating people as soon as the flu vaccine is available in their area.

3. Can the flu vaccine give me the flu?

- No, it cannot cause flu illness.
- Flu vaccines given through injection are made with either a virus that has been “inactivated” and therefore not infectious or, with no flu viruses at all.

4. What are the side effects of the flu shot?

- Soreness, redness, or swelling around the injection site
- Low grade fever
- Aches

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5. Does the flu vaccine work right away?

- No, it takes about two weeks after vaccination for the shot to be effective.

6. Are any of the available flu vaccines recommended over others?

- For the 2016-2017 season, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, recommends vaccination with either the inactivated influenza vaccine or the recombinant influenza vaccine.
- The nasal spray should not be used during the 2016-2017 season due to its low effectiveness over the past 3 years.

7. I have and an egg allergy. Can I still get the flu shot?

- People with egg allergies can receive any licensed, recommended age-appropriate influenza vaccine and no longer have to be monitored for 30 minutes after receiving the vaccine.
- People with severe egg allergies should be vaccinated in a medical setting and be supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic conditions.

On top of getting the flu vaccine annually, some other things you can do to prevent getting the flu this year are:

1. Avoid close contact with sick people
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

If you are sick with a flu-like illness, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone. Also, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Here, at MyFace2FaceMD™, we want you to have a happy and healthy winter. However, if you do get sick, we are here 24 hours a day 7 days a week, to meet your health care needs.

Dr. Brad McAbee, MD