Flu Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that fewer than half of Americans got an influenza (flu) vaccine last season, and at least 410,000 people were hospitalized from flu.

Flu takes a heavy toll on Alabamians, with 257 non-pediatric influenza-associated deaths in 2018, 93 deaths in 2019, and 2 pediatric deaths reported in state residents in each of these years. Increased vaccination coverage would reduce that burden.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get an annual flu shot. To find a local provider who offers adult flu vaccine, please visit Adult Immunization Providers (.//immunization/adult-immunization-providers.html). Contact your private physician, pharmacy, or local county health department (.//about/health-departments.html) for a flu clinic schedule or visit vaccinefinder.org (https://vaccinefinder.org).

Flu Vaccine Facts
- It takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after vaccination.

https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/flu/vaccine.html
Flu Vaccine does not cause flu. Influenza vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines. With rare exceptions, everyone 6 months of age and older should get an annual flu vaccine by the end of October.

**Flu Vaccine Benefits**
- Reduces risk of flu illness
- Reduces visits to the doctor
- Reduces hospitalizations and deaths related to flu illness

**Who Should Get the Flu Vaccine?**
- Everyone 6 months or older
- High risk groups
  - Young children
  - Pregnant women
  - People with certain chronic health conditions
  - People 65 and older
- Healthcare workers
- Caregivers for people in high risk groups or for infants younger than 6 months old

**Flu Vaccine and COVID-19**
An influenza vaccination will not prevent COVID-19, but it is the best way to minimize the risk of flu. COVID-19 is caused by infection with the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses. Flu and COVID-19 disease share many of the same symptoms — fever, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, and fatigue. These similarities may make illnesses more difficult to diagnose and treat. Getting a flu vaccine will reduce the chances of possible misdiagnosis and getting both diseases at the same time.

**Additional Resources**
- County Health Departments (.about/health-departments.html)
- Flu and Pneumonia Vaccines (ADPH Immunization) (.immunization/flu-and-pneu-vaccines.html)
- Vaccine Finder (https://vaccinefinder.org)
- CDC Flu Shot (https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/flushot.htm)

Page last updated: October 6, 2020

Influenza (Flu) Home (index.html)
Prevention (prevention.html)
Flu Vaccine (vaccine.html)
Vaccine Myths (myths.html)
2020-2021 Campaign (campaign.html)
Do 10 - Fight the Flu (do10.html)
Data and Surveillance (data.html)
Laboratory Testing (lab-testing.html)
Healthcare Providers (healthcare.html)
Resources (resources.html)
Contact Us (.infectiousdiseases/contact.html)
Infectious Diseases & Outbreaks (.infectiousdiseases/index.html)
Communicable Diseases (.bcd/index.html)
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) (.covid19/index.html)
Prevention

Take 3 Actions to Fight the Flu

Table of Contents:

- Earn Your Stripes: Take the time to get a flu vaccine.
- Take everyday preventative actions to stop the spread of germs.
- Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

Earn Your Stripes: Take Time for a Flu Vaccine

The annual flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every season with rare exceptions. Vaccination is particularly important for people who are at high risk of serious complications from influenza. It is an effective way to decrease flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and death.

Visit Flu Vaccine (vaccine.html) to learn more.

Stop the Spread

https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/flu/prevention.html
Simple, preventative actions that you can do every day go a long way toward stopping the spread of germs that cause the flu and other illnesses. Follow these easy steps to do your part:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Routinely clean frequently used surfaces and objects like countertops and door knobs.

Flu Antiviral Drugs

Your doctor may prescribe flu antiviral drugs for you. Taking these can make your flu illness milder and may shorten the time you are sick. If you are at higher risk and get symptoms, call your doctor early so you can be treated with antivirals if needed.

For more information on flu antivirals, visit CDC’s Seasonal Flu Treatment (https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/treatment.htm).

Page last updated: September 29, 2020