

# Get Your Flu Shot – Protect Yourself and Your Family

## Who should get the flu shot?

**Everyone 6 months and older should get the flu shot.** You need a flu shot every year. It is very important for some people to get a flu shot because they are at risk of serious influenza (flu) related problems.

Some people are at risk for **serious** flu related problems:

- Pregnant women
- Young children
- People with certain long-term medical conditions like diabetes and asthma
- People older than 50

## When should you get the flu shot?

You should **get your flu shot by the end of October** to protect yourself as long as possible. The flu “bug” that causes the flu can change a little bit each year. This means you need a flu shot **every year**. The flu is most common in the fall and winter. People start getting sick from flu in October and sometimes through late May.

## Why get the flu vaccine?

Your best protection against flu is to get the **yearly flu shot** (vaccine)! If you were exposed to the flu bug before you got your shot, your illness will be less severe. Even healthy people can get sick from flu and end up in the hospital or die. The flu shot can:

- Lessen your chance of flu illness, along with medical visits, missed work and school
- Decrease your risk for a flu-related hospitalization or death
- Prevent serious medical problems that happen if you have some long-term medical conditions
- Protect women during and after their pregnancy
- Protect babies from birth until they can get their own flu shot at 6 months.



**Even healthy people need a flu shot.**

**You need a flu shot every year!**

More on next page



## Is the flu shot safe?

Yes! The flu shot is safe. The flu shot can't cause the flu illness. The flu shot can cause mild side effects that can last 1 – 2 days. Some mild and rare side effects are:

- Soreness
- Redness
- Swelling
- Headache
- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Feeling sick to your stomach

These side effects are NOT the flu. The chance of serious harm or severe side effects from the flu shot is less than the problems from the flu.

**It is safe to breast feeding after you get the flu shot.**

**A mother's milk has antibodies that can help protect your baby.**

## Is the flu shot safe even in pregnancy?

Yes! Flu shots are recommended for pregnant women. The flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and your baby. You can get the flu shot at any time during your pregnancy during flu season.

Because you're pregnant, you are at a higher risk to get sick from the flu. You have changes in your immune, heart, and lung activity that puts you at risk. Catching the flu increases the risks for serious problems for your baby like early labor and delivery.

## Is flu the same thing as the common cold?

The flu and the common cold can be confused for one another. But the illnesses are not the same. Flu is more severe, lasts longer than the common cold, and you have a fever over 100.4°. If you have a cold, you get better in a week and don't have other problems.

**Ask us for your flu shot today!**

## Questions? Call us!

UNM Women's Clinics

Call us: 505-272-2245, Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm



**Protect yourself and those around you by getting a flu shot every year and every pregnancy.**