

The Flu and You

Tired of getting the flu? Arm yourself with knowledge to help take it down this season with this quiz.

What is the proper name for the flu virus?

- a) Fluorosis
- b) Influenza
 - i. Influenza. Also called the flu, it's a common but sometimes serious viral infection of your lungs and airways. It can cause congestion, fever, body aches, and other symptoms.
- c) Fluid Bronchitis
- d) Flonasia

Who should vaccinate?

- a) Anyone over 6 months of age
- b) Pregnant women
- c) People over the age of 65
- d) All of the above
 - i. Flu shots are appropriate for most people, though different flu shots are approved for people of different ages and biological situations, such as being pregnant. Everyone should get a vaccine that is appropriate for their age and biological circumstance.

When is the best time to receive the flu vaccine?

- a) January
- b) November
- c) October
 - i. It's best to be vaccinated before the flu begins spreading in your community. September and October are generally good times to be vaccinated against flu. Ideally, everyone should be vaccinated by the end of October.
- d) December

Who should not be vaccinated for the flu?

- a) People who have a severe allergic reaction to gelatin, antibiotics or other ingredients
 - i. Those who SHOULD NOT get a flu shot include: Children younger than 6 months of age; people with severe, life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in a flu vaccine (other than egg proteins); and people who have had a severe allergic reaction to a dose of influenza vaccine. If you have had a severe allergic reaction to an influenza vaccine in the past, it is important to talk with your healthcare provider to help determine whether vaccination is appropriate for you.

- b) People with an egg allergy
- c) 8 month old baby
- d) A and B only

What informs the medical world of what type of flu strain to expect each year?

- a) It is random
- b) The previous flu season
- c) The opposite hemisphere
 - i. The US typically looks to the Southern Hemisphere to determine which strains of the flu will be active that season. This is because our seasons are opposite: During the warmer months here in the Northern Hemisphere, it is winter in the Southern Hemisphere—meaning they are in the height of their flu season. Our scientists can predict which strains will be active here based on the ones that were active that year in the Southern Hemisphere.
- d) Probability and statistics

What complications can result from getting the flu? [select all that apply.]

- a) Pneumonia
- b) Sinus/Ear infection
- c) Myocarditis (inflammation of the heart)
- d) Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain)
- e) Rhabdomyolysis or Myositis (inflammation of muscle tissues)
- f) Multi-organ failure
- g) Sepsis
 - i. Most people who get the flu will recover in a few days to less than two weeks, but some people will develop complications from the flu that can be life-threatening and result in death. Sinus and ear infections are examples of moderate complications from flu, while pneumonia and the other listed conditions are serious flu complications. Having the flu can also make chronic medical problems worse. For example, people with asthma may experience asthma attacks while they have flu, and people with chronic heart disease may experience a worsening of this condition triggered by flu.

The swine flu vaccine is no longer available in the US.

- a) True
- b) False
 - i. In the past, vaccinations (particularly the flu vaccine used in the US during a swine flu outbreak in 1976) were linked to an increased risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome. But research has since found the chances of developing the condition after having a vaccination are extremely small. For example, a study into the vaccine used during the 2009 swine flu outbreak found that for every million people who had the vaccination, there were fewer than 2 extra

cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome.

And evidence suggests that you are far more likely to get Guillain-Barré syndrome from an infection, such as the flu, than the vaccine designed to prevent the infection.

The ‘stomach flu’ and influenza are the same thing.

a) True

b) False

- i. Because stomach flu, or gastroenteritis, is commonly referred to as “flu,” it’s easy to confuse it with influenza. But the two illnesses are not the same. While the stomach flu affects the stomach, influenza only affects the respiratory system (nose, throat, and lungs). Symptoms of the flu include fever, muscle aches, sore throat, and cough, and influenza can be prevented with a flu shot.

Washing your hands is the most important thing to do to protect yourself against the flu.

a) True

b) False

- i. The single best way to reduce the risk of seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated each year, but good health habits like avoiding people who are sick, covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like flu.

It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the antibodies to develop in the body that provide protection against the flu.

a) True

b) False