

## What you need to know about flu shots: Suggested talking points

- **Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu shot.**
  - The flu causes [tens of millions](#) of symptomatic illnesses and hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations in the U.S. every year.
  - Young children, older adults, and people with certain medical conditions are particularly vulnerable to serious complications from infection.
  - Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu shot.
  - People 65 and older should opt for the [high-dose, recombinant, or adjuvanted](#) versions of the vaccine—each of which is supposed to produce a stronger immune response.
  - If those versions aren't available, people 65 and older should get any other flu vaccine.
- **The best time to get vaccinated is September, October, or early November.**
  - Flu season in the U.S. typically peaks [between December and February](#), but it can last as late as May.
  - Ideally, everyone should be vaccinated by the end of October, but getting vaccinated too early can also be an issue, as the benefit of a flu shot wanes over time.
  - The CDC recommends vaccination in September and October.
  - Other experts say the best time to get vaccinated is [late October or early November](#) to ensure maximum protection throughout the flu season but to get the shot sooner if you start hearing about flu activity picking up where you live.
- **It's safe to get a flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.**
  - Public health officials are recommending both a flu shot and an updated COVID-19 booster this fall.
  - Both vaccines are available at most pharmacies, doctors' offices, and health care clinics and can be administered in one appointment.
  - People who are more than four to six months out from their last COVID-19 vaccine dose [should get their booster now](#) and consider getting a flu shot at the same time.

## What you need to know about flu shots: Frequently asked questions

### 1. Why is it important to get a flu shot every year?

The flu is often mischaracterized as a mild disease. But in reality, the flu causes [tens of millions of symptomatic illnesses each year](#) in the U.S. Among those who get sick, hundreds of thousands of people end up in the hospital and tens of thousands die. Young children, older adults, and people with certain medical conditions are particularly vulnerable to serious complications from the respiratory infection. Getting the annual flu shot is the best way to stay protected against the flu and its potential complications. To maximize protection, scientists modify the vaccine every year to protect against the four influenza strains expected to be most common during the upcoming season.

### 2. When should you get a flu shot?

The CDC says that, ideally, vaccinations can start in September and that everyone should be vaccinated by the end of October. However, getting vaccinated too early can also be an issue, as the benefit of a flu shot wanes over time. Flu season in the U.S. [typically peaks between December and February](#), but it can last as late as May. Other experts say the best time to get vaccinated is [late October or early November](#) to ensure maximum protection throughout the flu season. However, they also note that you should fast-forward your plans if you start hearing about flu activity picking up where you live.

### 3. Can you get a flu shot and an updated COVID-19 booster at the same time?

It's safe to get [a flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time](#). Since both vaccines are available at most pharmacies, doctors' offices, and health care clinics, it can be convenient for people to get their flu shot and updated COVID-19 booster in one appointment. However, people should be at least two months out and ideally four to six months out from their last COVID-19 vaccine dose to receive a [booster](#).