

Flu Virus

About the Flu Shot - Myths

The best defense against seasonal flu is to get immunized. Protect yourself and those around you. You can be confident that vaccines are authorized for use by Health Canada, only after undergoing rigorous reviews to ensure their safety, efficacy and quality.

Myth 1 : I didn't get a flu shot last year and I didn't get sick.

Even though you have avoided getting the flu so far, it does not mean that you will not get sick. Every year, different types of influenza virus circulate. By getting immunized, you decrease your chances of becoming ill.

Myth 2 : I'm young and healthy. I don't need a flu shot.

Even healthy children and young adults can become seriously ill. On average, the flu can leave you ill for up to seven days and even mild cases of the flu can impact you significantly. Sharing personal items like cell phones, eating utensils, pens and drinks also contributes to the spread of influenza. Proper personal hygiene and environmental cleaning can reduce the risk of spread.

Myth 3 : I don't need another flu shot. I got one last year.

Each year, different types of seasonal flu circulate and a new vaccine is produced annually that provides protection against the three most common flu strains predicted for the coming season. This year, this includes the pandemic H1N1 strain. Even if you had the H1N1 flu shot last year, protection afforded by the vaccine may last only up to one year, so a flu shot this year is recommended. Protection by the vaccine develops within two weeks after you have been immunized,

Myth 4 : You should not get the flu shot if you are pregnant.

Fact : While pregnant women are no more likely to get the flu than the rest of the population, they are more likely to develop complications from an influenza infection. This is because during pregnancy, their immune system is suppressed. Pregnant women, especially those in the second and third trimesters, and women up to six weeks after delivery are at a higher risk of developing complications, such as pneumonia, from influenza. Flu shots are safe and recommended for all pregnant women.

Myth 5 : Getting the flu shot will give me the flu.

Fact : This is simply not true. The vaccine does not contain any ingredients that would cause the flu and therefore the shot cannot give anybody the flu. At the time of year (fall and winter) that the vaccine is administered, many cold viruses cause illness. The presence of a cold may be mistaken for a reaction to the flu vaccine. The vaccine does not protect against cold viruses.

Myth 6 : The flu is just a bad cold.

Fact : The flu can be much worse than a cold. Colds do not generally result in serious health problems such as pneumonia whereas it is possible to get pneumonia from the flu. Even mild cases of the flu can impact you significantly.

Myth 7 : Flu shots aren't worth getting because they're not very effective.

Fact : The seasonal flu shot is typically 70 to 90 per cent effective in preventing the flu in healthy children and adults, when the vaccine is a good match to the influenza types circulating that flu season.

For More Information

For information about flu

Call the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
705-474-1400 ext 2252

Call the ServiceOntario INFOLine at 1-877-844-1944
TTY 1-800-387-5559
TTY (Toronto) 416-327-4282
Hours of operation : 8:30am - 5:00pm

To speak with a registered nurse

Visit [Telehealth Ontario](#) or call 1-866-797-0000
TTY: 1-866-797-0007
Hours of operation : 24 hours, 7 days a week