

2018-19 Flu Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Q: Where can I get the flu shot?

A: At the Riverside University Health System-Community Health Centers from 8 - 11:30 a.m. and 1- 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, appointments are encouraged, no cost, but donations are accepted. Also see partner listings at www.rivcoimm.org.

Q: What is the flu?

A: The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

Q: Who should get the flu shot?

A: All people 6 months and older.

Q: I am pregnant can I get the flu shot?

A: Pregnant women can and should get the flu shot. The flu shots will protect pregnant women, their unborn babies and even protect the baby after birth. If a pregnant woman has concerns she should check with her healthcare provider.

Note: There are preservative-free flu shots available for pregnant women and children 6 - 35 months. Contact your provider about preservative-free flu shots.

Q: Will I have to get two flu shots this season?

A: No. Only one flu shot is recommended annually. There is one exception to this: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that children ages 6 months through 8 years of age who have never received a seasonal flu shot get two shots 4 weeks apart for the first shot (i.e. first shot Oct 1 second shot Oct 29).

Q: What viruses will this season's flu shot protect against?

A: According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the upcoming season's flu vaccine will protect against the influenza viruses that research show will be most common during the season. This includes:

- [Trivalent influenza vaccine](#) contains 2 A strains (H1N1 & H3N2) and 1 B strain (Victoria lineage)
- [Quadrivalent influenza vaccine](#) contains the above mentioned strains plus another B strain (Yamagata lineage)

Note: People who received influenza vaccine in previous seasons are recommended to get immunized with the 2018-19 influenza vaccine for optimal protection against influenza.

Q: Is there a vaccine available for seniors who are 65 years or older?

A: Yes. Fluzone High-Dose is for persons 65 years or older. The health department does not carry it, but other providers may.

Q: Does the flu shot work right away?

A: No. It takes about two weeks after the shot for antibodies to develop in the body to provide protection against influenza virus infection.

Q: Is it too late to get vaccinated after Thanksgiving (or the end of November)?

A: No. The vaccine can still protect you. Influenza disease usually peaks in January or February and influenza can occur as late as May.

Q: Can I get the flu from the flu shot?

A: No. The flu shot cannot cause flu illness. The viruses contained in flu shots are inactivated (killed), which means they cannot cause infection.