

# Let's learn about the flu shot



**Children's**<sup>SM</sup>  
Healthcare of Atlanta

## Who should get it?

*Everyone older than 6 months of age*

## What is it?

*A yearly shot that helps protect you, your child and loved ones from the flu*

## Will it give me the flu?

*NO, there is no active virus in the shot*



## Why should I get it?

- It helps protect you from severe illness, complications, hospital stays and death.
- It helps prevent the spread of flu. This is especially important if you are around babies younger than 6 months, people who are immunocompromised from illness or disease that require strong medicines, and others who cannot get the flu shot.
- It makes symptoms milder if you get the flu from someone else.



## How well does it work?

- The flu shot is made each year with the 3 to 4 most common flu viruses that season. It lowers the risk of getting the flu by 50%. This means you are half as likely to get the flu.
- It takes about 2 weeks to provide protection from the flu. You could get the flu if you are infected before the shot or during the 2 weeks after you get it.



## Will it give me the flu?

- No. The flu shot includes inactivated or dead virus. You cannot get the flu from it.
- The flu shot shows your body what the flu virus looks like. Your body then creates antibodies to fight off the flu if you get infected.



## Are there side effects?

- Some people get a mild fever, soreness at the shot site or muscle aches.
- These symptoms are not from the flu virus itself.
- Side effects most often go away in 1 to 2 days.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

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# Frequently asked questions about the flu shot



## What else can I do to prevent the flu?

- Wash you and your child's hands well.
- Clean things and surfaces that you and your child touch often.
- Wear a mask when you are around sick people or if you are sick.



## What if my child is in the hospital?

- It is safe for your child to get the flu shot while they are in the hospital.
- We often offer the flu shot so we can watch your child for issues or symptoms and make sure they are well enough to go home.
- The doctor may choose to wait if your child is very ill.



## What are the risks of getting the flu?

- The flu is a common illness that most people get a few times in their life, and it can be dangerous.
- The flu can cause ear infections, bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children. It can be even more dangerous for children with asthma or other breathing conditions.
- The flu causes thousands of people to be in the hospital and die every year.



## What else do I need to know?

- Babies and children up to 8 years old getting the flu shot for the first time will need 2 shots that year.
- Everyone older than 6 months, including pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions, should get the flu shot every year.
- Talk with the care team and click the links below for more information.

[Video about flu vaccine](#)

[Benefits of flu vaccine](#)

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This is general information only. Talk with a doctor or member of the healthcare team about specific care of your child. In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

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