HOW TO DECIDE IF THE FLU SHOT IS RIGHT FOR YOU.

Should I get the flu shot?

YES

NO
The flu is a virus that strikes millions each year.

It causes mild to severe illness.

Most people get better in 7 – 10 days, but for some, the flu can worsen chronic health problems like heart disease, asthma, or diabetes.

All people 6 months old and older, plus pregnant women and people with chronic health problems, can get the flu shot early.

The flu shot is made of inactive flu virus. Some flu shots contain egg proteins.

The flu shot protects against the three or four flu viruses that will be most common during the season.

IEHP covers the flu shot. It’s FREE to Members who get it from a Provider in our network!
Babies as young as 6 months of age - there are certain vaccines approved for this age.

Babies, kids, teens & young adults - different flu shots are approved for people of different ages. Everyone should get a vaccine that is appropriate for their age.

Adults - some vaccines are only approved for adults. For example, a flu shot called the “the recombinant influenza vaccine” is for people aged 18 years and older, and the “adjuvanted and high-dose inactivated vaccines” are for people aged 65 years and older.

Pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions.

Get the flu shot before or during flu season - if you can check one of the boxes below for you or your loved one

- Babies as young as 6 months of age - there are certain vaccines approved for this age.
- Babies, kids, teens & young adults - different flu shots are approved for people of different ages. Everyone should get a vaccine that is appropriate for their age.
- Adults - some vaccines are only approved for adults. For example, a flu shot called the “the recombinant influenza vaccine” is for people aged 18 years and older, and the “adjuvanted and high-dose inactivated vaccines” are for people aged 65 years and older.

Decline the flu shot - if you (and/or your loved one) are among those who SHOULD NOT get it, as listed below:

- Children younger than 6 months of age – they are too young to get a flu shot.
- People with severe, life-threatening allergies to the flu shot or any ingredient in it. This might include eggs, gelatin, antibiotics, or other ingredients.

YES

NO
You should take a flu shot if you OR someone you live with has a chronic condition that needs regular visits to a Doctor. Check ✓ any that apply:

- Chronic heart disease
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- None of these fit me
- Other _____________________

Possible Side Effects

- The flu vaccine may slightly increase the risk of developing Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS). It is a rare nervous system disorder that can cause serious muscle weakness. GBS only affects one in a million people who get the flu shot.

- Some people wonder if the flu shot causes fever, fatigue, headache, or muscle pain. They are just as likely to get these symptoms if they are given a shot with a placebo.

- There is no clear evidence linking the flu vaccine to a higher risk of developing autism in adults or children.
See the table below for facts about getting the flu shot: (The charts show what happens to 100 people who chose other options during a flu season.)

Fewer people in the community **get the flu** during an outbreak if they take the flu shot.

- **NO FLU SHOT**
  - 15 out of 100 people get the flu

- **FLU SHOT**
  - 5 out of 100 people get the flu

Fewer patients **die from the flu** if their care Provider has a flu shot.

- **NO FLU SHOT**
  - 15 out of 100 people get the flu

- **FLU SHOT**
  - 11 out of 100 people get the flu

More people who have a flu shot report **having a sore arm** for 1 or 2 days.

- **PLACEBO** a shot that is not active
  - 23 out of 100 have sore arms

- **FLU SHOT**
  - 52 out of 100 have sore arms
After reading about getting the flu shot (on pp. 1 - 4), check the box next to the reason that best shows your choice (i.e., not important or very important).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>NOT Important</th>
<th>VERY Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping a person from getting sick with the flu</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the risk of going to the hospital to care for severe flu</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the risk of getting admitted to an intensive care unit (ICU)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing serious medical events associated with chronic conditions</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting a person and those around who are more likely to get severe flu illness</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the severity of illness in people who get the flu shot but still get sick</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If most of your answers are “**VERY Important**,” then you should get the flu shot – unless you are among those listed on page 2 who should NOT get it.
Find out how well this brochure helped you learn the key facts. Check ✓ the best answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Flu Shot</th>
<th>Refuse Flu Shot</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Which choice has the highest chance of you getting the flu?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Which choice has the lowest chance of patients dying from flu that was spread by their care Providers?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Which choice has the highest chance of a sore arm as a side effect?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANSWER KEYS: 1. Refuse flu shot 2. Flu shot 3. Flu shot

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge: Do you know enough about the benefits and side effects of each choice?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values: Are you clear about which benefits and side effects matter most to you?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support: Do you have enough support and advice from others to make a choice?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubt: Do you feel sure about the best choice for you?</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Check ✓ your next steps:

☐ YES I have chosen to take the flu shot before or during the flu season.

☐ ? I need to talk about the choices with my Doctor and family.

☐ NO The flu shot is not for me

WHERE CAN YOU GET A FLU SHOT?

Flu shots are offered in many Doctor’s offices, clinics, health departments, and pharmacies. Contact your Doctor’s office to find out where you should get one.
This information is not intended to replace the advice of a health care Provider.

IEHP adapted this decision aid from the Ottawa Influenza Decision Aid (OIDA), which was developed by Canadian researchers who conducted an extensive review of the available scientific literature. Content Editors: A. McCarthy MD, S. Sullivan MSc, J. Sutherland MEd and the Ottawa Influenza Decision Aid Planning Group Funded in part by: CIHR, MOHLTC via SHRTN. All Authors have declared no conflict of interest. Format is based on the Ottawa Decision Guide.


To learn more, please contact the Occupational Health and Safety Department for the “Facts and Numbers Behind the Ottawa Influenza Decision Aid.”
