



# Flu shot FAQ: What to know

## 1. Who should get a flu shot?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu shot, but it's especially important for those in these high-risk categories:

- Children younger than 5, particularly those under 2 years old, but not younger than 6 months
- Pregnant women
- Adults 65 and older
- Anyone with chronic conditions such as asthma, COPD, diabetes and heart disease

It's equally important for parents and caregivers of infants and toddlers to get flu shots, too.

## 2. When should I get my flu shot?

Flu season typically starts in October and can go as late as May. It takes about two weeks for the flu shot to take effect, so it's a good idea to get it now to make sure you're protected.

## 3. Will the flu shot make me sick?

Flu shots will not give you the flu. They're made with either inactivated or weakened viruses so they can't cause illness. Mild side effects are possible, however. People have reported symptoms such as soreness, swelling, low-grade fever and headache after getting the shot. These reactions typically begin soon after vaccination and last no more than two days.

## 4. Where can I get my flu shot?

Use your member ID card at a participating pharmacy. Most are located at stores you frequent on a weekly basis.

Ask for a flu shot at your next scheduled doctor appointment. Out-of-pocket costs may apply to other services during the appointment.

## 5. I have an HMO plan. Do I need to see my doctor first for a referral?

No, but tell your doctor if you get a flu shot from another source so he or she can keep track in your medical records.

## 6. Can I get the flu shot and a COVID shot at the same time?

The CDC has issued guidance stating that flu shots and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time. Even though both vaccines can be given during the same visit, you should follow the recommended schedule for each vaccine.



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Need to find a pharmacy? Want more information about flu shots?  
Learn more at [bcbsm.com/preventflu](https://bcbsm.com/preventflu).