

FLU SHOT FACTS

- ◆ **Influenza** related illness is the **6th leading cause of death in the U.S.** Flu claims over 60,000 lives annually.
- ◆ The flu is most contagious before symptoms appear.
- ◆ The flu is a contagious viral respiratory infection, which attacks the lungs causing chills, fever, weakness, loss of appetite and aching. Sore throat, dry cough and nausea are also possible.
- ◆ The flu is spread by sneezing, coughing and direct hand contact.
- ◆ Bacterial pneumonia is the most common complication of the flu.
- ◆ The U.S. flu seasons generally runs from December through March.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE FLU SHOT

- ◆ You don't catch the flu from the flu shot, today's vaccine is made from 'dead' or inactive viruses.
- ◆ A new vaccine is developed each year.
- ◆ Last year's shot won't provide protection against this year's flu.
- ◆ Vaccine begins providing protection after about two weeks.
- ◆ The vaccine protects against this year's three most prevalent strains of the flu virus.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Can I still get influenza even though I get the vaccine this year?

Yes. Influenza viruses' change often and they might not be covered by the vaccine. But people who do get influenza despite being vaccinated often have a milder case than those who did not get the shot.

What problems might I encounter after receiving the flu shot?

The risk of a vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small. Almost all people who get the influenza vaccine have no serious problems from it.

Mild problems:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given.
- Fever
- Aches

If these problems occur, they usually begin soon after the shot and last 1-2 days.



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