



Protect Yourself From the Flu: Important Info for People With HIV

Flu vaccines prevent illness and reduce hospitalization among people with HIV and others at higher risk for serious complications.

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Flu season is upon us, and that means it's time to get a flu vaccine.

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Every year, millions of people get infected with flu, with potentially serious complications. Getting the yearly flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others from flu.

While seasonal flu activity is low across most of the country, CDC recommends September and October as good times to get the vaccine. Contact your healthcare provider, local health department, or pharmacy, or use the [Flu Vaccine Finder](#) to find a flu vaccine in your area.

Flu vaccines are particularly important for people with HIV. People with HIV, especially those who have a very low CD4 cell count or not taking antiretroviral treatment, are at a higher risk of developing serious flu-related complications and hospitalization. For this reason, people with HIV should get an annual flu shot (not the nasal spray) as the best form of protection against flu. Flu vaccination prevents illness and reduces hospitalization among people with HIV and others at [higher risk](#) of developing serious flu complications.

Flu, COVID-19, and RSV Vaccines

In addition to flu, you can get sick from other respiratory viruses, including [COVID-19](#) and [respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\)](#), especially in the fall and winter. This is the first fall and winter virus season when vaccines are available for these three viruses. CDC [recommends](#) that [everyone aged 5 years and older](#) should get one dose of the updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to protect against serious illness from COVID-19. [People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) may get additional doses of the updated COVID-19 vaccine.

[Editor's note: [An updated COVID-19 vaccine from Novavax](#), using more traditional technology, is also now available.]

CDC also recommends that adults 60 years and older may receive a single dose of RSV vaccine,

based on discussions between the patient and healthcare provider. Talk to your healthcare provider about what is right for you.

Learn More

We encourage you to learn more about the seasonal flu, take steps to protect yourself, and educate others. Here are some resources to help you:

- Read our HIV Basics page: [Flu and People with HIV](#).
- Read CDC's page on how [HIV increases your risk of developing serious flu-related complications](#).
- Read CDC's page: [Treatment for People with High Risk of Serious Flu Complications](#).
- Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) for important information about the [flu vaccine](#) and [different ways to pay for vaccines](#).

Remember, the best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated every year.

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