

Knock Out Flu.

KnockOutFlu.org

Blog Post for Fall 2021

Think of It as Your Best Defense

This year, it's more important than ever to get vaccinated against the flu. The flu vaccine can keep you from getting and spreading the flu to others during the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and help keep our hospitals from being overwhelmed.

Why is it so important to get the flu vaccine this year?

Flu activity was unusually low last year. People in Washington did a great job getting their flu vaccine, and the COVID-19 safety measures like masking, staying home, and limiting gatherings also helped limit the spread of the flu.

But this year, many of these safety measures are lifted. Some people are returning to work in-person, and most children are going back to in-person school. That means we have a much higher risk of exposure to the flu virus. And with last year's low activity, most people weren't as exposed to flu viruses, so they don't have much natural immunity to the flu anymore. Getting the flu vaccine is your best defense.

Should I still get the flu vaccine if I'm usually healthy?

Yes, we recommend the flu vaccine for everyone six months and older. The flu vaccine protects not only you, but also the people you're around. Flu can be serious even in healthy people, but some people are at higher risk including:

- People 65 years and older
- Young children, especially those under 5 years of age
- Pregnant people
- People with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or neurologic conditions

While flu illness can be mild in most people, it's important to remember how serious flu really is. Sadly, over 900 people in Washington died from flu-related illness in the last five years, including many children. The flu vaccine saves lives.



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When should I get the flu vaccine?

You should get your flu vaccine before the end of October for the best protection through the fall and winter months when flu is most likely to spread. You can even get your COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time.

You can still get a flu vaccine for several months after October and get protection through the end of the flu season in the spring.

Where can I get a flu vaccine?

You can visit your local doctor's office, pharmacy or clinic event in your area. Call the [Help Me Grow Washington hotline](#) at 1-800-322-2588 (language assistance available) to find a flu vaccine location near you. If you're working, you can also check with your employer to see if they are hosting an on-site clinic for their staff.

Does my insurance cover the flu vaccine?

Most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare part B, cover the cost of flu vaccine for adults. If you do not have insurance, you may still be able to get the flu vaccine at no cost. Talk to your [local health department](#) for more information.

Children aged 18 and under in Washington can get a flu vaccine and other recommended vaccines at no cost. The provider may charge an administration fee to give the vaccine. You can ask them to waive this fee if you cannot afford it.

For more information, visit www.KnockOutFlu.org.

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