Don’t let the flu get you

**Flu shots are for everyone**

But are they really necessary? Absolutely.
First, let’s dispel the myths.

*Simple bed rest and liquids can cure the flu.* That’s an old wives’ tale.

*The flu shot gives you the flu.* Again, no. Some people may feel a touch sick after, but it’s rare.

*Only certain people need the flu shot, like babies and older people.* Wrong.

**The fact is:** Everyone ages 6 months and older should get a yearly flu shot. This protects you, your family and your community.

**More flu shot facts**

Of course, the flu shot fights the flu.

But what exactly is the flu? It’s a virus that can cause respiratory infection. It spreads quickly. And it can lead to pneumonia and other complications.

**How to fight the flu**

The flu shot is your best defense to protect yourself against the flu virus.

**Here’s when to get it:**

- **Every year.** The flu virus changes each year. So the vaccine you get is updated to protect you from new strains.
- **October or November.** Still, getting it in December or January offers protection since flu season can last as late as May.

There are other ways to protect yourself, like washing your hands often or wiping down surfaces with disinfectant.
And if you do get the flu, ask your doctor about antiviral drugs. They can shorten the time you have the flu.

**There’s a shot for pneumonia, too**

It protects you from pneumococcus. This is a bacteria that can cause infection in the lungs, blood or the covering of the brain and spinal cord.

This infection is serious. Very serious. Those most at risk are infants and toddlers, adults over 65, and those with certain medical conditions.

Best advice? Speak with your doctor. They can shed light on what shots are right for you.

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