

Flu Vaccination Debunking the Myths



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To be vaccinated or not to be vaccinated—that is the question! Aside from the aversion to being stuck with a needle, many people make the decision **not** to receive the vaccine due to some false beliefs. Here are a few myths and facts to consider:

Myth: *You can catch the flu from the flu shot*

Fact: There is no live virus in the flu shot, so it is impossible for the shot to cause the flu. Some people may have a reaction to the vaccine—low grade fever, discomfort at injection site, and mild muscle aches for 1-2 days after the injection. Immunity does not occur until 2 weeks after receiving the vaccine. If you are exposed to the flu prior to this time, you may get the flu.

Myth: *It is not necessary to get the flu shot every year.*

Fact: The types of flu viruses circulating in the community change from year-to-year. Each year, vaccines are made for the particular flu strains that scientists believe will be active. Immunity to the flu lasts only one year.

Myth: *People with chronic illnesses should not receive the flu shot.*

Fact: People with chronic illnesses such as COPD, asthma, diabetes, and heart disease have higher risk for getting the flu and developing complications such as pneumonia or bronchitis. People with severe allergies to eggs, previous vaccinations, or history of Guillian-Barre syndrome should not take the flu shot. Check with your doctor if you have an acute illness at the scheduled time of vaccination. Depending on the severity of your illness, the flu shot may have to be postponed.

Myth: *You should not get vaccinated before October.*

Fact: The CDC recommends that high-risk individuals get vaccinated in September. Individuals can be vaccinated anytime from September through the winter.

Some other facts to consider:

A nasal-spray flu vaccine is approved for use in healthy people 2-49 years of age. 2. Transmission of the flu occurs when the virus comes in contact with a person's mucous membrane (eye, nose, mouth). Via droplet in the air from a sneeze or cough of a contagious person. Via your hands—you touch a surface where the virus is present then touch your nose, mouth, or eye **before** washing hands with an antibacterial gel or washing with soap and water 3. The flu virus is easily killed by wiping surfaces with a disinfectant. 4. Children are more contagious than adults and can be infectious **before** symptoms appear. They continue to be contagious for about 14 days. 5. Adults are typically most contagious on the second and third days and remain contagious for about 10 days. 6. Flu symptoms come on suddenly - headache, body aches, high fever (101-102° F), chills, dry cough, extreme fatigue, and occasionally nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.



*Best advice from Erma Bombeck:
Never go to a doctor whose office plants have died!*

Exercise can help with Memory Problems

Take a brisk walk today!

Lifestyle changes may help to delay Alzheimer's disease. In a study conducted at the Univ. of Melbourne, adults with beginning memory problems experienced some improvement in their cognitive function when they took part in a home-based physical activity program.

Medical journalist Susan Aldridge, PhD, states that "this is the first study that shows that exercise can improve cognitive function in older adults at risk of dementia because they report memory problems."

"The targets achieved in this work are realistic for anyone - extra walking up to 50 minutes a day three times a week," continues Aldridge. "We don't know exactly how exercise improves cognitive function - it may be that it increases blood flow to the brain which can, in itself, improve brain function. Studies have shown that this particularly improves functioning in the parts of the brain relating to attention which would tend to improve memory."



These results were reported in the September 3, 2008 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

See the summary article "Exercise can Help with Memory Problems" at:
[www.healthandage.com/
public/article-home/3381](http://www.healthandage.com/public/article-home/3381)