

BUSINESS HEALTH AFFILIATES, INC.

ON-SITE FLU VACCINATIONS



Influenza Questions and Answers

(For more details and answers visit www.cdc.gov/flu)

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FLU AND THE STOMACH FLU?

Stomach flu is a gastro-intestinal problem which includes symptoms of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. The flu vaccination is protecting against a respiratory problem caused by a virus and is highly contagious. Symptoms of the flu are sore throat, dry cough, fever, chills, weakness, loss of appetite, fatigue, and aching of the head, back, arms and legs. Complications of the flu may include inflamed sinuses and inner ear, bronchitis, and pneumonia. Complications may lead to death.

WHEN SHOULD ONE GET A FLU VACCINATION?

It takes two (2) weeks for the vaccine to take effect in the human body. You should get the vaccination after September 15th and prior to the first week of December, the official start of the flu season.

WHEN IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE EXPOSED TO THE FLU?

Most exposures occur during the winter season. In most of the United States, that is usually from December to March.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM EXPOSED BEFORE 2 WEEKS AFTER MY FLU SHOT?

You will still have some protection. While it may or may not be enough to protect you from contracting the flu virus, it will make the flu symptoms less severe.

WILL A FLU VACCINATION MAKE ONE SICK?

Today's vaccine is made in the laboratory from an inactive, replicated virus. This does not cause one to become sick. In the past, vaccines were made from "live" virus, and could actually cause an illness. Some reactions are reddening of the area where the needle entered the skin and/or a slight fever. The fever is caused by the body's immune system producing helpful antibodies. A non-prescription pain reliever can relieve any such symptoms.

ARE FLU VACCINATIONS JUST FOR THE ELDERLY?

Flu vaccines are for *anyone* who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu. The *average age* of corporate/fitness center participants who receive vaccinations is 36.2 *years*. The elderly and immuno-compromised are a high risk group, meaning that their consequences of getting the flu are more serious than those of people who are not in a high risk group.

DOES THE FLU VACCINATION HURT?

Some anxiety to getting an inoculation is normal, however, the flu vaccine is less uncomfortable than having the flu. The inoculation is given in the deltoid muscle of the non-dominant arm. The second-smallest of needles is used, second only to the needles used by diabetics. We do not use a needle free system, as the discomfort from that method is more significant than from a needle. The amount of serum is only 1/2 cc. This is equal to approximately 1/8 teaspoon or 1/60 of an ounce.

HOW ARE FLU VIRUSES NAMED?

Each virus is named after the place where it is first diagnosed. Each year's vaccine protects against the flu virus strains identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (as being the most prevalent).

HOW LONG WILL THE VACCINE PROTECT AGAINST THE FLU?

The vaccination protects four (4) to six (6) months following inoculation (according to the vaccine manufacturer).

WHO SHOULD NOT GET THE FLU VACCINE?

Persons who are allergic to eggs or Thimerosal (contact lens solution preservative) should not get a flu vaccine because eggs and Thimerosal are used in the vaccine manufacturing process. Getting a flu vaccine would cause the allergic reaction typical of these exposures. People with a high fever or other active infection should wait until their fever subsides, because the body heat can destroy the vaccine, thus nullifying its effect. Consultation with a physician is also necessary in circumstances of an active neurologic disorder, multiple allergies, a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome or Bell's Palsy, and the receipt of another vaccine within the past 14 days. Pregnant women can no longer receive a vaccine containing Thimerosal within the state of California.

WHY SHOULD I GET A FLU VACCINE AGAIN THIS YEAR?

Last year's flu viruses have mutated to a point where we are not immune to them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) predict which flu viruses will be particularly prevalent each winter. If you have increased exposure to the public, school aged children, or travel frequently, you should consider receipt of the vaccination.