

IMMUNIZATION

Overview

Flu vaccination has been shown to reduce flu related illnesses by 40 - 60% when the circulating flu viruses match the viruses used in vaccine development.

Vaccine Development

All current US flu vaccines protect against two flu A viruses and two flu B viruses.

Flu virus components are picked based on:

- Which flu viruses are making people sick and how they are spreading before the upcoming flu season
- How well the previous season's vaccine did in protection
- Ability for the viruses to provide cross protection from other flu viruses

The World Health Organization (WHO) meets twice a year to review surveillance, lab, and clinic studies and make recommendations for the composition of the flu vaccine. Each country will then make its own decision about which viruses should be included in its vaccine. This is the FDA in the US.

Ingredients

Ingredients found in the flu vaccine include:

- Formaldehyde - used to inactivate toxins from the virus or bacteria
- Thimerosal - used against contamination and is only found in multi-dose vials
- Aluminum salts are used to boost the body's immune response
- Gelatin is used as a stabilizer to keep the vaccine effective
- Antibiotics are used to keep bacteria from growing
 - Antibiotics that people are commonly allergic to, like penicillin, are not used in vaccines

More details on vaccine ingredients in US licensed vaccines can be found at [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov) under "Common Ingredients in US Licensed Vaccines".

Vaccine Providers

Flu vaccines are offered in many clinics, pharmacies, and local health departments.

Visit [vaccines.gov/find-vaccines](https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines) for more information.

EXCITE

The EXCITE Project is an interagency agreement with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are funding the Cooperative Extension System to address health disparities among rural and other underserved communities.

The Family & Community Health Unit focuses on holistic infectious disease prevention to help Texans better their lives.



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INFLUENZA

FLU IN TEXAS
PREVENTION
IMMUNIZATION



INFLUENZA

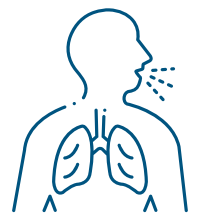
What is the flu?

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is an infection caused by influenza viruses that impact the nose, throat, and sometimes lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness and can sometimes lead to death. There are four types of influenza viruses - A, B, C, and D. Types A and B are the two main types we see in humans during flu season.

Symptoms

Symptoms of the flu can include some or all of the following:

- Fever* or feverish chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body or muscle aches
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in kids)



*Not all people with the flu will have a fever

Spread

Most often, flu viruses can spread by droplets when someone with the flu coughs, sneezes, or talks - these droplets can land in the mouth or nose of someone nearby.

Less often, flu viruses might be on surfaces and can be spread by touching that surface then your mouth, eyes or nose.

Flu in Texas

A typical flu season starts when the weather cools off and then ends when it starts to heat back up. **In Texas, this tends to be October through May.** Flu cases can be seen year round.



Keep up to date on flu in Texas by visiting howdyhealth.tamu.edu

Prevention

Every day preventative actions you can take include:

- Physically distance yourself from those who are sick - if you have to take care of someone who is ill, consider masking when around them
- Cover your cough or sneeze in the crook of your elbow or into a tissue
- Wash your hands frequently - see our program Scrub Up Tune Up!
- Yearly flu immunization can reduce flu related illness up to 60%. See "Immunizations" for more information.



SCRUB UP
TUNE UP



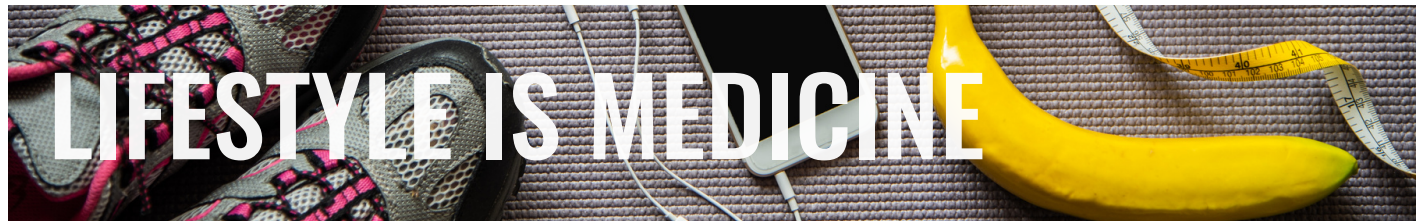
Risk

Some people have a higher risk of getting very sick if they catch the flu. These groups include:

- 65 years of age or older
- Pregnant people
- Children younger than 5
- Those with chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, and others.

You can reduce your risk of severe illness or even death from the flu and other infectious diseases by realizing the

IMPACT OF LIFESTYLE ON HEALTH



LIFESTYLE IS MEDICINE

Physical Activity

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults get:

- At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity (walking 30 min per day, 5 days/week)
- At least two muscle strengthening activities per week

A recently published study followed about 600,000 American adults and found those that met both recommendations were 43% less likely to die from the flu!



Try out Walk Across Texas! or the 10-10,000 Change Challenge to meet your physical activity goals!

Visit howdyhealth.tamu.edu for more information

Nutrition

Eating well provides nutrients that help your immune system function the way it is meant to.

What does eating well look like?

Nutrition Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults eat:

- 2 servings of fruit per day
- 3 servings of vegetables per day



Limiting saturated fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars also contributes to a healthy diet.

Contact your County Agent for program offerings to meet your nutrition goals!

Visit howdyhealth.tamu.edu for more information