

Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#94 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

Prevent Influenza Get Vaccinated



See your doctor, call 311 or visit nyc.gov



**Protect yourself
from the misery
of influenza.**

Get vaccinated.

Influenza makes you miserable, and can lead to serious complications.

- Influenza (flu) is a contagious lung infection that causes fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches.
- Every year, hundreds of New Yorkers die from influenza-related complications. Even more are hospitalized.

Vaccination is the best way to protect against influenza.

- Flu vaccine can be given in a shot (needle injection), or in a nasal spray, called FluMist. The nasal spray is for healthy people between 2 and 49 years old. Your doctor can tell you what's right for you.
- Get a flu vaccine every year to protect yourself and your family. This year's flu vaccine will protect you throughout the flu season.
- Influenza can occur year round. It is most common in the winter.
- The sooner you're vaccinated, the sooner you'll be protected. But, getting a flu vaccine any time will protect you.

Everyone 6 months and older should get vaccinated, but some people are more likely than others to have serious complications from influenza.

The flu vaccine is especially important for people in these groups:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 5 years, especially those younger than 2
- People age 50 and up, especially those 65 and older
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People with certain long-term health conditions, including:
 - Diabetes
 - Lung disease, including asthma
 - Heart disease
 - Sickle cell anemia
 - Weakened immune system (such as from HIV or cancer treatment)
 - Seizure, nerve and muscle and other disorders that may cause breathing problems
 - People who are very overweight (a Body Mass Index of 40 and over)
- Those who live with or care for persons at high risk of complications, including:
 - Health care workers
 - People who live with or care for infants younger than 6 months who are too young to be vaccinated



Protect yourself and your baby from the dangers of influenza.

**DIAL
311**

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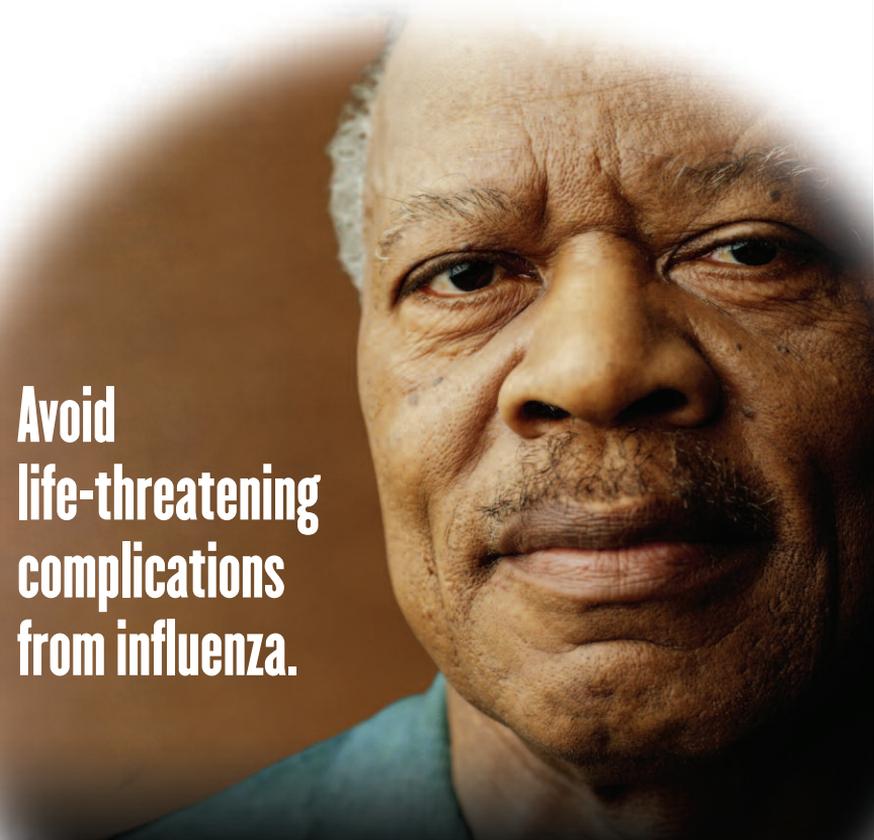
Cover your cough and wash your hands.

Take everyday actions to prevent the spread of influenza and other infections:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or the inside of your elbow — not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Don't get too close to people who are sick.
- If you get sick yourself, avoid close contact with other people.
- Stay home from work or school until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours, without fever-reducing medicine.

Where can I get a flu vaccine?

- Get a flu vaccine from your family doctor or primary care provider.
- Many pharmacies offer flu vaccine for adults.
- Many employers offer free or low-cost flu vaccines.
- Health Department immunization clinics offer flu vaccines at no cost. New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation facilities also offer flu vaccines at no or low cost.
- For more information about where to get vaccinated, call **311**, or visit **nyc.gov** and search for **flu**.



Avoid
life-threatening
complications
from influenza.

True or False?

1 You can't get the flu from the flu vaccine.
True. The flu vaccine can't give you influenza because it uses killed or weakened viruses.

2 The flu shot is recommended for pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy.
True. Pregnant women are at higher risk for influenza-related complications and hospital admissions. The flu shot will protect your baby after birth until he or she is old enough to get vaccinated.

3 It's important to get vaccinated if you have a long-term health condition.
True. People with long-term health problems, such as diabetes or asthma, are more likely to have serious complications from influenza such as pneumonia. Influenza can also make long-term health problems worse.

4 All health care workers need to get vaccinated every year.
True. The flu vaccine not only protects you from influenza, it protects your patients, your coworkers and your family.

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 3

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Prepared in cooperation with
Division of Disease Control
Bureau of Immunization



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**DIAL
311**

For Non-Emergency NYC Services
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages



Scan to find a flu vaccination clinic near you.