

Seasonal Respiratory Vaccines

- ✓ Viral illnesses from influenza (the flu) and COVID-19 tend to be more widespread in the winter than the summer.
- ✓ The viruses that cause the flu and COVID-19 mutate over time. In addition, protection due to prior vaccines and prior infections lessens over time.
- ✓ For these reasons, updated vaccines for influenza (the flu) and COVID-19 are recommended each fall.
 - ❑ Individuals who have gotten the vaccine are less likely to get the targeted infection (such as the flu).
 - ❑ If you get the vaccine and still get the targeted infection, you may have a milder case of the infection.
 - ❑ Individuals who have an underlying medical condition, such as lung disease due to alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, are more likely to have poor outcomes if they get the flu or COVID-19.
 - ❑ There are treatment options for both of these viral illnesses if a breakthrough infection occurs.
- ✓ For more information regarding recommended vaccines, please see the following website <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html>
- ✓ If you have had a transplant or are pregnant, please work with your healthcare provider to learn recommendations specifically for you.

Influenza (Flu) Vaccine

- ✓ There are two main strains of flu that tend to cause infections: influenza A and influenza B.
- ✓ Each year's flu shots aim to protect against both strains of flu with a single shot. The single shot for all vaccines in 2024 contains protection against two strains of influenza A and one strain of influenza B.
- ✓ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older should get vaccinated against the flu.
- ✓ Individuals who are age 65 or older should receive a high-dose vaccine.
- ✓ The optimal time for vaccination is September and October each year to confer best protection.
- ✓ Individuals who receive the flu vaccine every year have less risk of getting the flu than individuals who get the flu vaccine in some years but not others.

COVID-19 Vaccine

- ✓ COVID-19 infections are still common.
- ✓ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved two updated COVID-19 vaccines on August 22, 2024, and it is likely that additional COVID-19 vaccines will be approved.
- ✓ In the past few years, the COVID-19 virus has been mutating faster than the flu virus.
- ✓ The updated vaccines for fall 2024 were developed to protect against the most recent strains of the COVID-19 virus. The hope for these updated vaccines is that they will be effective against future strains.

Can I Get the Flu Vaccine and the COVID-19 Vaccine on the Same Day?

- ✓ Research has shown that it is safe to receive both of these vaccines on the same day.
- ✓ Research has also shown that the effectiveness of the vaccines is not reduced when they are both received on the same day.
- ✓ Local reactions (pain and redness) and most systemic reactions (fever, chills, fatigue) are not allergies and do not occur with every vaccination.
- ✓ Since both vaccinations prevent hospitalizations, getting both vaccinations is wise. Getting both on the same day improves vaccination rates.