

Questions and Answers about the Flu and the Flu Shot

Where can I get the seasonal flu shot?

Call or visit your doctor to make an appointment to get your flu shot.

What if my doctor doesn't have any flu shots?

Your doctor can give you the local Health Department phone number; or if you need help getting a flu shot, call Customer Service at 1-800-903-5253.

Who should get the seasonal flu shot?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that the seasonal flu shot should be given to the following people:

- Children age 6 months up to their 19th birthday.
- Pregnant women.
- People 50 years of age and older.
- **The CDC also says that people 65 years of age and older should get the new high dose flu shot. Ask your doctor if the high dose flu shot is right for you.**
- People of any age with long-term health problems.
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from the flu, including:
 - Health care workers;
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu;
 - and
 - Household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young for shots).
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives seem to be at higher risk for flu complications.
- People who have an unhealthy weight (see your doctor for advice).

You should NOT get the seasonal flu shot this year if...

- You are allergic to chicken eggs.
- You have a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS).
- You became very sick after a flu shot.
- You have a sickness with a fever. You should not get a flu shot until you are feeling better.

Does the flu shot have any side effects?

- Talk to your doctor about side effects.
- The flu shot is made from a virus that is no longer active.
- Therefore, no one can catch the flu from a flu shot.
- Less than one out of three people will feel sore around the shot site for one or two days.
- Fever, aches and pains are not common and more severe reactions are rare.
- Recent studies have shown that the flu shot does not increase asthma attacks.

What flu shots are covered by UnitedHealthcare Community Plan?

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan covers the regular injectable influenza shot. The flu nasal spray will not be covered. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program may cover the flu nasal spray. Ask if your doctor is a VFC provider.

What do I have to pay?

If you get your flu shot from a UnitedHealthcare Community Plan doctor or health care provider, you will not have to pay any costs. If you go to your local Health Department, there may be a charge.

What can I do to keep from getting the flu?

Here are some tips to help you and your family from getting the flu:

- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Stay home when you are sick** and stay away from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may stop those around you from getting sick.
- **Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs can spread when a person touches something that has germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- **Keep your hands clean** by washing them often with soap and warm water. This is very important.

For more information, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>