

Questions and Answers

Regarding the Flu and the Flu Vaccine

Where can I get the seasonal flu shot?

You can set up an appointment by calling your doctor or your local health department.

It is important to know that this year you may need more than one shot, because of a new type of flu called Swine Flu (H1N1).

What if my AmeriChoice/UnitedHealthcare doctor or health care provider doesn't have any flu shots?

We have asked all our doctors, facilities and health care providers to refer our members to the local health department

We also will help you find a flu clinic near you, if you have trouble finding one through your providers or health department. If you are over age 18 you also can call VaxAmerica at (888) 444-8522.

Which flu shot should I get?

Your doctor or health care provider will choose the shot that is best for you based on your age and health condition, as well as the availability of shots in your area.

Who should get the seasonal flu shot?

Currently, the CDC is recommending that the seasonal flu shot be given to the following people

1. Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday
2. Pregnant women
3. People 50 years of age and older
4. People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
5. People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
6. People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - a. Health care workers
 - b. Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - c. Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

Who should get the Swine Flu (H1N1) shot?

The following people are considered **high priority** for getting the shot when it becomes available:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age

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- Persons age 25 through 64 who have health conditions associated with higher risk of flu-related medical complications, including asthma, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease and pregnancy

Ask your doctor if you should get an H1N1 flu shot.

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

- You are allergic to eggs or any component of the vaccine. The viral material in flu vaccines is grown in eggs.
- You have a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome.
- You became severely ill after a flu shot.
- You have an acute illness and a fever. You should not get a flu shot until you are feeling better.

Are there possible side effects to Flu Shots?

- Discuss side effects with your doctor
- The flu vaccine 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 develop soreness around the injection site for one or two days.
- Fever, aches and pains are not common and more severe reactions are rare.
- A recent American Lung Association study has proven that the flu shot does not increase asthma attacks.

What flu shots does AmeriChoice cover?

For the 2009-2010 flu season, AmeriChoice provides coverage for regular injectable influenza vaccine and the administration of the nasal mist through the Vaccines for Children program.

What do I have to pay?

If you get your flu shot from an AmeriChoice /UnitedHealthcare doctor or health care provider, you will not have to pay any costs. .

What can I do to avoid getting the flu?

Here are some tips to help you and your family try to avoid 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.
- **Keep your hands clean** by washing them often with soap and warm water. This is very important.
- **Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

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

