Health Awareness

Flu Season Is Here: 3 Steps to Take Now

(NAPS)—Influenza (flu) is nothing to sneeze at. It's a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. There are two main types of flu virus: A and B.

Millions of Americans get the flu every year and thousands are hospitalized because of it.

Some people, particularly those 65 years and older, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk of serious flu complications.

How to Protect Yourself

There are three things you can do to help keep yourself and your family from getting the flu:

1. The most important thing is to get a flu shot.

- **When to get it:** The CDC recommends that you get vaccinated in September or October, before flu season begins, and ideally by the end of October.
- **Why get a flu shot every year:** Protection from the flu vaccine declines over time and the vaccines are updated to help protect against the most common virus strains that will be circulating during the upcoming season.
- **What does it cost:** Fortunately, flu shots are free through most insurance plans, including Medicare, at most pharmacies. Many CVS pharmacies have special flu vaccines designed for children and others for people over 65. These pharmacies also offer more than 15 other preventive vaccines, including RSV and COVID-19.
- **How to get the vaccine:** You can make appointments for yourself and your family by visiting CVS.com, MinuteClinic.com or via the CVS Health app—or you can walk-in to locations nationwide.



It's a healthy idea to get your annual flu vaccine early in the fall flu season.

2. Regularly Wash Hands throughout the Day: Touching everyday items like door handles and other surfaces can be difficult to avoid.

- To help combat the spread of viruses and bacteria, wash your hands regularly (especially after coughing or sneezing) with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your mouth, eyes, and nose.
- Alcohol-based sanitizers that contain at least 60 percent alcohol can be used when you are on-the-go, and soap and water are not available.

3. Practice a Healthy Lifestyle: Healthful habits that can help protect you against the flu and other illnesses include**:**

- getting plenty of sleep
- being physically active
- managing stress
- drinking adequate fluids
- eating nutritious food

Learn More

For further facts on vaccines, visit www.cvs.com or www.minuteclinic.com.