

Why you need your flu shot now

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Every year, millions of people in the U.S. contract the flu. Many people recover from the illness, but some require hospitalizations. And, unfortunately, every year some people die of flu-related complications. Dr. Tina Ardon, a Mayo Clinic family medicine specialist, says the flu

vaccine is the best defense against seasonal flu, and everyone who is able to get one should do so.

Seasonal flu is a virus that attacks your respiratory system. Most people get better on their own, but the flu can be serious for some.

"Our younger children and our older adults definitely can get more sick from the flu," says Ardon. "Patients who are already sick with other chronic conditions, or are undergoing chemotherapy are more likely to have complications."

Complications include bronchitis, pneumonia and heart problems.

"The vaccine for influenza is one of the best defenses we have," says Ardon.

She says some people don't get the [flu vaccine](#) because they think it could cause the flu.

"The flu vaccine is what we call a dead vaccine."

You can't get the flu from a [flu shot](#). FluMist, while safe for most people, contains a weakened form of the virus, so people with certain conditions should get a shot instead.

Ardon stresses that everyone who can get it should get it. It takes two weeks for the [vaccine](#) to work, so get your flu shot now.

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