

Public knowledge varies greatly on flu and COVID-19, surveys show

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There is wide variability in what the U.S. public knows about the seasonal flu and COVID-19, but some facts are much more strongly associated with an individual's vaccination behavior.

For several years, the Annenberg Public Policy Center's nationally

representative Annenberg Public Health and Knowledge Survey (ASAPH) has assessed public knowledge of vital health information, including how to prevent and treat the [seasonal flu](#) and COVID-19, two of the three illnesses in last year's "triple-demic" outbreak that overwhelmed some health care facilities (the third was RSV, or [respiratory syncytial virus](#)).

Even after taking education into account, [survey data](#) reveal that the answers to just eight questions are better than many others at predicting whether a person has been vaccinated against the flu or is willing to get an annual COVID-19 [vaccine](#) if recommended by public health officials.

"Knowledge about the nature, effects, and prevention against a potentially deadly virus is valuable in its own right," said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) of the University of Pennsylvania. "But some knowledge is more associated with vaccination than other knowledge."

APPC research director Dan Romer said the ASAPH surveys, which were administered with a nationally representative panel of U.S. adults, posed two dozen questions to assess public health knowledge of the flu and COVID-19. All of those questions were related to forms of vaccination acceptance—either with having received a [flu shot](#) or expressing a willingness to get an annual COVID-19 vaccine.

"Here, we've picked the eight questions—four for the flu and four for COVID—that had the strongest ability to independently predict taking either action," Romer said.

We invite you to take our true-or-false quiz and test your knowledge against what the public knows. The answers follow the quiz. Take this quiz online [on our website](#).

Provided by Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania

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