

Flu Vaccine for Preteens and Teens

A yearly flu vaccine is the best way to protect your child from flu and its potentially serious complications.



Why should my child get a flu vaccine?

- Reduces the risk of flu illness
- Reduces the risk of hospitalization from flu
- Can be life-saving in children
- May reduce illness severity among people who get vaccinated but still get sick with flu
- Reduces the chances that your child will have to miss school or other activities and you will have to miss work to care for them
- Helps reduce the spread of flu to family and friends, including babies younger than 6 months who are too young to get a flu vaccine, and older people who are more vulnerable to getting very sick from flu
- If your child has certain long-term health problems, they are at higher risk of developing serious flu complications.

When should my child be vaccinated?



Preteens and teens should get a yearly flu vaccine by the end of October.

However, getting vaccinated later can still be beneficial. Vaccination should continue to be given throughout the flu season, even into winter or later.

Where can my child get a flu vaccine?

Flu vaccines are available in many places, including doctor's offices or clinics, and sometimes at local health departments, pharmacies, urgent care clinics, grocery stores, and schools. Visit [vaccinefinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org) to find a place near you to get a flu vaccine and other recommended vaccines.

Are flu vaccines safe?

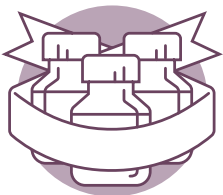
Flu vaccines have a good safety record. Hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received flu vaccines for more than 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines.

Like any vaccine or medicine, flu vaccines can have side effects. When they occur, flu vaccine side effects are generally mild and go away on their own within a few days.

Fainting after any vaccine is more common among preteens and teens. To help avoid fainting and injuries related to fainting, preteens and teens should sit or lie down when they get a shot and for about 15 minutes after getting the shot.

How can I get help paying for these vaccines?

Most health insurance plans provide coverage for routine vaccinations. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program also provides vaccines for children 18 years and younger who are uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid-eligible, American Indian, or Alaska Native. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/Features/VFCprogram.



Talk to your child's doctor or nurse about the flu vaccine or visit www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent

