



## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the 2018-2019 flu season**

### **1. Is it important to get a flu vaccine every year?**

**Yes! The CDC recommends a yearly injectable flu vaccine for almost everyone, 6 months of age and older.** Getting a flu vaccine is the most important step in preventing the flu. Please see this link for more information on the rare exceptions to the CDC recommendation on flu vaccine, including anyone who has an allergy to eggs or to any of the ingredients in the vaccine. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm>

### **2. What groups of individuals are at high risk for serious complications from the flu?**

Below are the groups of people who are more likely to get serious flu-related complications if they get sick with flu.

#### **People at High Risk of Developing Flu-Related Complications**

- [Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old](#)
- [Adults 65 years of age and older](#)
- [Pregnant women](#) (and women up to two weeks postpartum)
- Residents of nursing homes and other [long-term care facilities](#)

#### **People at high risk for serious flu complications include individuals with medical conditions including:**

- Asthma
- **Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions, including intellectual disability, moderate to severe developmental delay, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy.**
- Endocrine disorders (such as diabetes)
- Kidney disorders
- Liver disorders
- Weakened immune system due to disease or medication
- People with extreme obesity

See this link for further information from the CDC on persons at high risk of developing serious flu-related complications: [https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high\\_risk.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm)

### **3. What are some flu symptoms that require prompt medical attention?**

Any person with a health condition that increases their risk for serious complications if they become sick with the flu (see the above question and answer), should get prompt medical attention if they have

flu symptoms. The CDC recommends that health care professionals treat flu illness promptly in high risk persons who have underlying medical conditions, by prescribing flu antiviral drugs.

Flu symptoms can include **fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue**. Some individuals may also have vomiting and diarrhea. Some persons may have the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

#### **4. What treatment is recommended by the CDC when an individual has the flu?**

- Treatment should begin as soon as possible because antiviral drug treatment works best when started early (within 48 hours after symptoms start). See this link from the CDC for additional information on flu antiviral drugs: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/antivirals/whatyoushould.htm>
- Antiviral drugs can make the flu illness milder and make the individual feel better faster. They may also prevent serious health problems that can result from flu illness.
- Keep the individual at home, except for doctor visits, for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- Make sure the individual gets plenty of rest and clear fluids (water, broth, sports drinks, etc.).

#### **5. What are the warning signs of flu sickness, that require emergency medical care?**

##### **When to Seek Emergency Medical Care**

If the individual has a neurological condition and experiences any of the following emergency warning signs of flu sickness, seek medical attention right away:

##### **In Children:**

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

##### **In Adults:**

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough

**For additional information from the CDC on the 2018-2019 flu season, please see this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>**