

ABC

Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.  
Saving the Hearts and Minds of a Diverse America  
abcardio.org

# Stop the Flu From Stopping You

Getting the flu (Influenza) puts you at risk for serious illness, especially if you are age 65 or older, younger than age 2, pregnant or have a chronic health condition such as heart disease. Flu-related illness may also increase the risk of heart attack. Prevention is the best way to protect yourself and others. Here's how:

## Build Your Defenses



Everyone 6 months and older should **get a flu shot every year!** This is the best way to lower your risk of serious illness.



**Wash your hands often** to keep flu germs away. If needed, use an alcohol-based hand rub instead.



**Minimize touching your face** and keep high-touch surfaces like door knobs and counters clean.



**Stop the spread.** Keep your distance if others are sick and stay home if you are sick. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.



High-risk? **Wear a mask that fits well** over your nose and mouth when in confined spaces.

## Why get a new flu shot every year?

The flu virus changes and adapts often, so during each flu season, October thru May, the vaccine also changes to combat the flu strains causing the most infections. **This is why you need a new shot every year.**

**If you're age 65 or older:** When getting your flu shot, ask for a "differentiated vaccine." This type of flu vaccine is shown to better protect older adults by increasing their immune response.

## → Time It Right



**The sooner the better ...** but getting your shot anytime during flu season can help you avoid illness.



**The best time?** Getting your shot by the end of October helps you to build immunity before flu season is most active.

## → Safeguard Your Heart and Your Health



More than **90%** of adults hospitalized with flu have at least one chronic health issue.



About **50%** of those hospitalized with flu have heart disease and 70% are age 65 and older.

**The flu shot prevents tens of thousands of hospitalizations each year.**



Non-Hispanic Black people experience the highest flu-related hospitalization rates due, in part, to chronic conditions that are more common in underserved groups.

**Getting your flu shot can help change this.**



Having the flu while pregnant can lead to serious complications. **Getting the flu shot while pregnant helps protect both mother and baby.**



Visit [cdc.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu) to find a flu shot site near you! To learn about other ways to protect yourself, visit [abcardio.org](https://www.abcardio.org) and scroll down to find our Adult Vaccination resource.



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