



# Wellness by the Month

## FLU PREVENTION

### What is the flu?

Flu or influenza is a viral infection in the nose, throat and lungs. The flu virus is spread mainly from person to person through coughing and sneezing from an infected person. The flu can also be spread by touching something with the flu virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth. According to the CDC, most individuals are able to pass the virus on to others one day before symptoms appear and up to five days after becoming sick. The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu shot each year.

### Who should get the vaccine?

Anyone wishing to reduce their chances of getting the flu should get the vaccine. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that people at high risk for complications from the flu should get the vaccine every year. This includes: children aged six months to five years; pregnant women; people 50 years and older; those with certain chronic medical conditions and those who live in nursing homes or other long term care facilities.

To protect yourself and others, practice healthy habits by washing your hands often, stay home when you are sick, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and avoid close contact with people who are sick. Wash your hands thoroughly after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water is not available, an antibacterial hand gel is a good substitute. Use antibacterial wipes to clean your phone and computer keyboard. The best way to protect yourself against the flu is to get the flu shot. The flu vaccine is generally available from October through January.

Flu shots can be provided at your Primary Care Physician's office. Contact your PCP office directly to schedule a flu shot at their site or go to [www.findaflushot.com](http://www.findaflushot.com)

Remember: **Stay home** when you are sick to prevent spreading the flu to your coworkers.

Visit the CDC web site, [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu), to get additional information on how to stop the spread of germs at work or to print children's materials or flu posters. Or you can call the CDC Flu Information Line at (800) CDC-INFO.