COVID-19 & FLU VACCINES:
PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR LOVED ONES

WHY GET VACCINATED?

COVID-19 & flu can be severe.
Both illnesses can lead to complications such as pneumonia, hospitalization, or even death, particularly for high-risk groups like older adults, young children, pregnant people, and those with chronic conditions.

Vaccines are the best protection.
Vaccines reduce the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death. COVID-19 vaccines are updated regularly to target circulating variants, and flu vaccines are reformulated each year to match current strains.

TYPES OF VACCINES AVAILABLE

COVID-19

mRNA Vaccines (Pfizer & Moderna):
Use a small piece of mRNA to teach your immune system how to recognize the virus.

Novavax:
A non-mRNA option that uses protein-based technology. It's available for those who prefer an alternative to mRNA vaccines, with similar efficacy in preventing severe disease.

FLU

Standard Flu Vaccines:
Recommended for everyone 6 months and older.

High-Dose and Adjuvanted Flu Vaccines:
Specifically designed for adults 65+ to provide a stronger immune response. These vaccines help compensate for the natural decline in immune function with age, offering better protection against severe flu-related complications.

Nasal Spray Vaccine (Live Attenuated):
This needle-free option is available for healthy, non-pregnant individuals aged 2-49. It contains a weakened form of the virus that **cannot cause infection** in healthy people.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

COVID-19

Recommended for everyone aged 6 months and older. Some older adults (65+) and those who are immunocompromised may receive additional doses for extra protection.

FLU

Recommended for everyone aged 6 months and older, with specific high-dose options for older adults.

WHEN TO GET VACCINATED

COVID-19

Shots are regularly updated to match circulating variants. It is recommended to get vaccinated as soon as the latest vaccine is available. If you've had COVID-19, you can wait at least 3 months after infection before getting vaccinated.

FLU

Ideally, get vaccinated by the end of October, but vaccination can continue throughout flu season.

WHERE TO GET VACCINATED

Check with your healthcare provider, local pharmacy, or health department for availability.

COMMON QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

Do vaccines really work?

Yes! COVID-19 and flu vaccines significantly reduce the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death. If you do get infected, your illness is likely to be milder after vaccination.

I've had COVID-19 or the flu. Do I still need the vaccine?

Yes! Immunity from infection wanes over time. For COVID-19, you can wait at least **3 months after infection** (but no more than 8) before getting the updated vaccine, which boosts your protection against newer variants. For flu vaccines, you can generally get vaccinated even if you have mild illness. However, if you have a moderate or severe illness with or without fever, it's best to wait until you've recovered.

Can I get COVID-19 or the flu from the vaccine?

No. COVID-19 vaccines **contain no live virus**, and most flu vaccines also do not contain live virus. The nasal spray flu vaccine contains a weakened (attenuated) virus that **cannot cause infection** in healthy individuals.

What about myocarditis from COVID-19 vaccines?

There is a small increased risk of myocarditis, particularly in young males, after mRNA COVID-19 vaccination. However, studies show the risk of myocarditis is **much higher from SARS-CoV-2 infection** than from the vaccine itself, even for young males.

Scan the QR code to access more detailed information on COVID-19 and flu vaccines.
For a complete list of sources, visit www.uspodsources.com

THE UNBIASED SCIENCE PODCAST

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