

# Have heart disease? Take steps to avoid the flu.



**Getting the flu can make you more likely to have a heart attack or stroke. Get your flu vaccine. It's the best way to avoid the flu and the heart troubles that can come with it.**

Every year, millions of people get the flu (you may have also heard it called influenza).


The flu can make you feel pretty lousy. But if you have heart disease, the flu can be very serious.

#### **You're more likely to:**

- Get sicker from it
- Need hospital care

#### **The flu can also make:**

- Any heart issues you do have worse
- Heart attack, stroke or death more likely - even after the virus is gone



**1 out of 2 people**  
in the hospital because  
of flu have heart disease

There's a **6x** higher risk  
of heart attack in the week  
after being infected

**A flu shot helps protect against heart and other related health issues - even if you do get sick.**

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about the flu vaccine.



#### **Flu shots work**

- More than half of people who get a flu vaccine won't get sick.
- For those who do get sick and were vaccinated, the illness is milder and doesn't last as long.
- You cannot get the flu from the vaccine.

# Help avoid the flu and stay heart healthy

As this year's flu season kicks into high gear, take steps to protect yourself and those around you.



**Stay active and choose heart-healthy food**  
to strengthen your immune system



**Get your flu shot**  
It's safe and quick.  
Remember, it takes 2 weeks after being vaccinated for it to really work.



**Take your heart and other medications regularly**



**Wash your hands often**  
with soap and water



**Avoid close contact with sick people**



**Cover your mouth and nose**  
when you cough or sneeze and wear a mask if needed



**Stay home if you feel unwell**  
or until any fever is gone for at least 24 hours

## Where to find a flu vaccine



Many doctors' offices



Your pharmacy



Your workplace



Community/public health clinic

## Don't forget about COVID

COVID-19 and the flu will be around this fall and winter. Make sure you are protected against both. It's OK to get a flu shot and a COVID vaccine or booster at the same time.

If you are sick or think you have COVID, check with your doctor before getting a flu shot. You may need to reschedule.

## When to call

If you feel sick and think you might have the flu or COVID, tell your doctor right away. There are medicines (called antiviral drugs) that can be given. These medicines can help treat the infection, but they need to be started within 2 days of getting sick.

Make sure to call your doctor or health clinic if you have any of these symptoms:



Fever or chills, though not everyone has a fever



Muscle or body aches



Cough



Headache



Sore throat



Feeling very tired



Runny or stuffy nose



Shortness of breath



For more information, visit [CardioSmart.org/Flu](https://www.cardiosmart.org/Flu).



For a full list of symptoms, visit [CDC.gov/Flu](https://www.cdc.gov/Flu).