

The Flu & COVID-19

Level Up
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OHRM Office of Human Resources Management



As flu season approaches, it may complicate the already difficult task of identifying any unusual symptoms you may experience this fall. Is it a cold or allergies? Or, is it something more serious, like the flu or COVID-19? In order to help rule out the flu, be sure to get a flu vaccine early this year. Getting a flu vaccine will not only help protect yourself but will also help protect those around you.

What is Influenza (Flu)?

According to [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.

Why You Should Get Vaccinated

- The flu vaccine prevents millions of illnesses and flu-related doctor visits each year.
- It can reduce the risk of flu-associated hospitalization for children, working age adults and older adults.
- Those who are considered *high risk* face greater complications without the vaccine.
- It's an important preventive tool for people with chronic conditions.
- Several studies have shown a reduction in the severity of illness in people who get vaccinated, but still get sick.



Flu & COVID-19: Similarities and Differences

Similarities

- Both are contagious respiratory illnesses.
- Common signs and symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue and headache.
- One or more days can pass between a person becoming infected and when he or she starts to experience illness symptoms.
- Highly contagious and can quickly spread to others.
- Increased health complications.

Differences

- Symptoms may take longer to develop with COVID-19.
- Loss of taste or smell is an added symptom specific to COVID-19.
- Recovery varies.
- There are currently FDA approved drugs to treat the flu; however, there are no approved drugs to treat COVID-19.

For more up to date information on the similarities and differences, visit the CDC's website, [Similarities and Differences between Flu and COVID-19](#).

Get Your Flu Shot Now

The flu season is coming and [Level Up](#) wants you to be protected. With the ongoing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year is more important than ever to get your flu shot. Below is information on where to obtain your free flu vaccine.

Cigna members

1. Refer to the [list of participating providers](#).

2. Locate a pharmacy that is convenient for you.
3. Call ahead to make an appointment and to confirm the pharmacy is still a participating provider.
4. In order for your vaccine to be covered at 100%, you must:
 - a. Obtain your vaccine at one of the participating locations
 - b. Carry your medical ID card with you
 - c. Notify the pharmacy to bill your medical plan not prescription plan

Kaiser Permanente members

1. Refer to the [list of locations for flu shots](#).
2. Schedule an appointment by visiting kp.org or calling the 24/7 appointments and advice line at 800-777-7904 (TTY 711).
3. You have four options of getting your flu shot: Drive-thru clinic, In medical center clinic, Walk-up clinic or Flu Saturdays.

If you are not enrolled with the County's Cigna or Kaiser Permanente medical plans, we encourage you to contact your health insurance provider or your doctor to obtain flu vaccine this fall.

The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year – it is your best defense. For additional information on the importance of getting the vaccine, [click here](#).

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