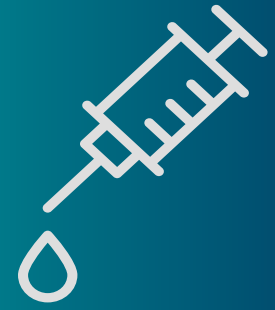


4 REASONS IT'S STILL IMPORTANT TO Get Your Flu Shot



Pediatric epidemiologist and infectious disease specialist Dr. Emily Godbout from Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU offers four crucial reasons everyone should get a flu shot this year.

1. FLU SHOTS HELP REDUCE SERIOUS RESPIRATORY ILLNESS.

While some people who get vaccinated may still contract influenza, the flu shot typically prevents about 70 out of every 100 people who receive it from developing a moderate to severe flu infection. So even though the vaccine might not completely prevent the flu, it can help keep you from getting sick enough that you have to go to the hospital. "Reducing the overall burden of respiratory illnesses is really important to help protect vulnerable populations at risk for severe disease," said Godbout.



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2. FLU SHOTS ARE SAFE.

"The flu shot is very safe and effective at helping prevent severe disease and hospitalization," Godbout said. The doctor also pointed out that patients will not contract influenza from the vaccine. "The virus is inactivated," she said, "so it can't actually cause the flu infection after you get the shot."



3. FLU SHOTS ARE UPDATED EVERY YEAR.

"The U.S. flu vaccine is reviewed every single year and updated to match circulating flu viruses," said Godbout. She also said that our antibody response – what helps us fight the virus – can decrease over time, so a yearly dose will help boost the antibody response before the start of the influenza season.



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4. A FLU SHOT PROTECTS YOU THROUGHOUT THE SEASON.

Now is a good time to get vaccinated. It takes a couple of weeks for antibodies to develop in your body, but the vaccination will continue to protect you throughout the worst months of the flu season.

