

GETTING A FLU SHOT

MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER BEFORE

People who use drugs are more likely to get sicker if they get the flu than people who don't use drugs. They are at higher risk for being hospitalized and needing a ventilator to help them breathe. It's important to get a flu vaccination (flu shot) every year, but this year it is especially important, due to COVID-19.

COVID-19, like the flu, can cause severe breathing and lung problems and other dangerous symptoms. Both can lead to pneumonia, other serious health issues or death. Getting both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time could be very serious.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE FLU

Get a flu shot! Flu vaccines are offered in many places, including doctor's offices, clinics, health departments, pharmacies, and college/university health centers. Even if you don't have a regular health care provider, you can get a flu shot at a health department or pharmacy. **Individuals who don't have health insurance should contact their local health department to ask about flu vaccination clinics.** For the best protection during flu season, try to get your flu shot before the end of October. Flu season lasts until May, so anytime between September and May offers protection.

The things we are doing to protect us from COVID-19 can also help protect us from the flu. Protect yourself and others by:

- wearing a mask or cloth face covering when you are around people you don't live with;
- washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand-sanitizer with 60% or more alcohol;
- practicing social distancing (keeping at least six-feet away from others); and
- staying away from others if you feel sick.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Prevent skin infections by keeping your injection sites clean, drink plenty of water, eat healthy food and get some exercise. The healthier your body is the better chance you have of fighting off illnesses.

If you need more information on flu shots, visit:

- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/flu/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm>

For more information on COVID-19, go to:

- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus>