

The truth behind common flu shot myths

It's that time of year again! The weather is getting colder, and everyone is beginning to feel sick.

If you've ever had the flu before, you know the symptoms are unpleasant and it takes a long time to recover. But did you know more than [41 percent of adults](#) didn't get the flu shot in 2018? Misunderstandings about the flu vaccine spread almost as quickly as the flu itself, so here's what you need to know about some common misconceptions!

“I'm healthy, so I don't need the flu shot”

We are happy you're healthy, and we want to work to keep you that way! And the easiest way to do that is by getting the flu shot. Just because you didn't catch the flu last year doesn't mean that you won't catch it this time. Not getting the shot because you haven't had the flu is sort of like not wearing a seat belt because you haven't been in a car accident. This year's vaccine contains [two new strains of the virus](#), so make sure you're protected!

Part of why vaccination is so important (and [recommended by the CDC](#)) is that it not only protects *you* but also other people who are more at risk. Some people around you can't get the flu shot – whether it's because they're too young or they have allergies to ingredients in the vaccine – and even if you don't show symptoms, you [could still share the virus](#) with the people around you.

“I can get the flu from the vaccine”

The flu shot can't give you the flu because it doesn't contain a live version of the virus! You can still get symptoms like a sore arm, but this is from receiving the shot and is not a symptom of the flu! Even if you get the nasal spray version of the virus – which is great if you're not too fond of needles – it contains a [weakened version](#) of the virus and can't get you sick.

If you've previously been sick soon after getting the shot, chances are you were already sick when you were vaccinated. The shot takes about two weeks to build immunity, so you still have to [take precautions](#) because you aren't immediately protected.

“It only covers one strain of the virus”

Most flu vaccines contain four strains of the virus, but there are some which contain three and are meant for people 65 and older. The strains you receive are also supposed to be the most common that year which is why you need a flu shot every year!

So you should get a flu shot, right? For most people, yes! However, there are a few exceptions like children under 6 months old and people with life-threatening allergies. If you have concerns about getting the flu shot, you should speak with your physician!

Are you feeling under the weather? Schedule an appointment with [Dr. Yao](#) and he can help you feel your best!