

ARE YOU *prepared* FOR *flu season?*

Fall heralds the approach of flu season, which usually extends from late fall through early spring.

Each year, it's important to consider protecting yourself from the flu with a flu shot. This year may be challenging because there will be two forms of flu in circulation: seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu, sometimes referred to as swine flu.

Shots for seasonal flu are recommended for some people

each year because the virus that causes the flu changes and the effects of the vaccine do not last from year to year.

This year, a vaccine specifically targeting the H1N1 flu may be available, in addition to the seasonal flu vaccine.

Should you have a flu shot?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people who are at high risk for complications from the flu should receive a flu shot each year. They include:

- Individuals with chronic medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, asthma, or diabetes

- Anyone with an altered immune system
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season
- Adults 50 and older
- Children between the ages of 6 months and 18 years
- People who live with or care for a person who meets any of these criteria

Check with your doctor

Speak with your health care provider to determine if you should receive both the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 flu vaccine.

To learn more

To learn more about how to avoid catching or transmitting the flu, visit tuftshealthplan.com.



For ongoing updates on the flu season, go to tuftshealthplan.com and click on the flu information link to cdc.gov.

Ask Your Provider about the Pneumonia Vaccine

If you're 65 or older, or you have a chronic health condition, ask about getting the pneumonia vaccine, too. The pneumonia vaccine can be safely given at the same time as the flu shot. Most adults need only one pneumonia vaccine, although some may need to be immunized again after five years.