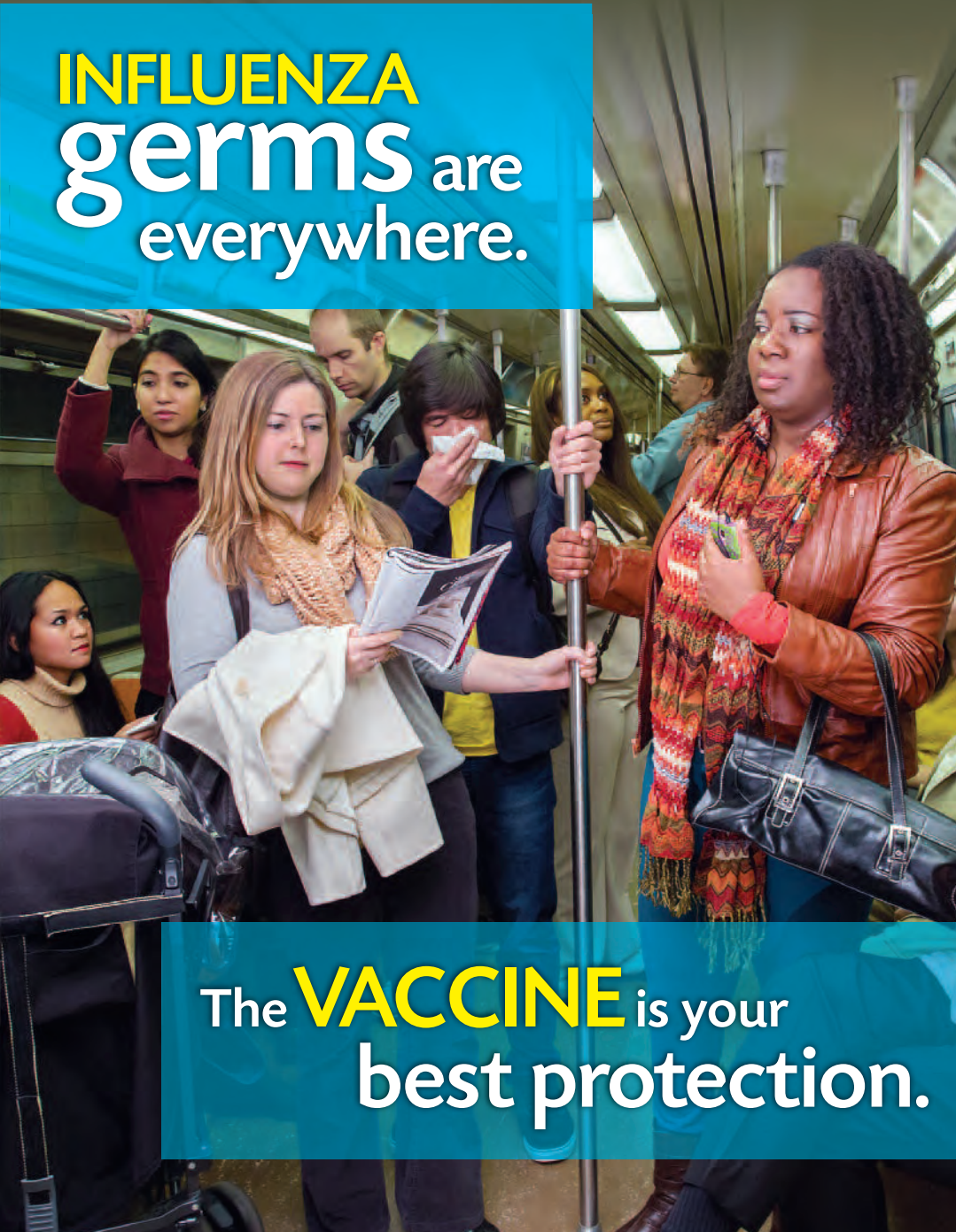


# Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#97 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

**INFLUENZA**  
germs are  
everywhere.



The **VACCINE** is your  
best protection.

See your doctor or **call 311**



Protect yourself  
from influenza  
with a **FLU VACCINE.**

## **GET VACCINATED.**

Influenza is dangerous and can lead to more serious health problems, like pneumonia. But a flu vaccine can protect you from that misery.

- Influenza (flu) is a contagious lung infection that causes fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches.
- Every year, hundreds of New Yorkers die from influenza-related complications. Even more are hospitalized.

## **Vaccination is the best way to protect against influenza.**

- The flu vaccine can be given in a shot (needle injection), or as a nasal spray, called FluMist. The nasal spray is for healthy people between 2 and 49 years old. Your doctor can tell you what's right for you.
- Get a flu vaccine every year to protect yourself and your family. This year's flu vaccine will protect you throughout this flu season.
- Influenza can occur year round. It is most common in the winter.
- The sooner you're vaccinated, the sooner you'll be protected. But getting a flu vaccine any time will protect you.

## Everyone 6 months and older should get vaccinated.

Vaccination is especially important for people who are more likely to have serious complications from influenza:

- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 5 years
- People age 50 and up
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People with certain long-term health conditions, including:
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease, including asthma
  - Heart disease
  - Sickle cell anemia
  - Weakened immune system (such as from HIV or cancer treatment)
  - Seizure, nerve and muscle and other disorders that may cause breathing problems
  - People who are very overweight (a Body Mass Index of 40 and over)
  - Children and adolescents (age 6 months to 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- Those in close contact with people at high risk of complications, including:
  - Health care workers
  - People who live with or care for infants younger than 6 months who are too young to be vaccinated



Protect yourself and your baby from the dangers of **INFLUENZA.**

**DIAL  
311**

For copies of any Health Bulletin

For all Health Bulletins, visit [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) and search for **Health Bulletins**.

For a free email subscription, visit [nyc.gov/health/email](http://nyc.gov/health/email).



## Cover your cough and wash your hands.

Take everyday actions to help prevent the spread of influenza and other infections:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or the inside of your elbow — not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Don't get too close to people who are sick.
- If you get sick, avoid close contact with other people.
- Stay home from work or school until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours, without fever-reducing medicine.

## WHERE CAN I GET A FLU VACCINE?

- Family doctor or primary care provider
- Most pharmacies provide flu vaccine for adults
- Many employers offer flu vaccines
- Health Department immunization clinics or New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation facilities
- How to find a location:
  - Call **311**
  - Text **flu** to **877877**
  - Visit **nyc.gov** and search for **flu**



# The Flu Vaccine: Frequently Asked Questions

## **1 Will my newborn baby be protected if I get a flu shot when I'm pregnant?**

Yes. The flu shot will protect your baby after birth until he or she is old enough to get vaccinated at 6 months of age.

The vaccine also protects pregnant women, who are at higher risk for flu-related complications and hospital admissions.

## **2 Is it okay for children to get a flu vaccine when they get so many already?**

Yes. Studies show that children can safely get several vaccines. Children are exposed to thousands of germs every day. The killed or weakened germs in flu vaccines are small compared to the millions of germs children fight off each day.

## **3 Why do health care workers need to get a flu vaccine every year?**

Health care workers need to get a flu vaccine every year to protect themselves, their patients, coworkers and family from influenza.

## **4 Can I get influenza from the flu vaccine?**

No. The flu vaccine uses killed or weakened viruses and cannot cause influenza.

## **5 Why do some people still get sick after getting the flu vaccine?**

The flu vaccine protects people from most, but not all influenza infections. People exposed to influenza within two weeks after getting vaccinated may not have full protection. Some people, including those with weakened immunity or 65 years of age and older, may not get as much protection from the vaccine as healthy people. The flu vaccine only protects against influenza, so people may still get sick from other viruses that cause flu-like symptoms.

**There is no better protection from the dangers of influenza than a flu vaccine.**

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 3

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**New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

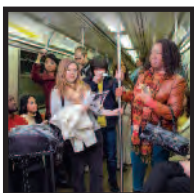
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*Prepared in cooperation with*

Division of Disease Control

Bureau of Immunization



**INFLUENZA**  
**germs** are  
everywhere.

**DIAL  
311**

**For Non-Emergency NYC Services**

**Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages**



**Scan to find a flu vaccination clinic  
near you or text flu to 877877.**