

## Script – Print - Flu Season Still a Concern

### Despite slow start, physicians say you still should get your flu shot

According to the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, more than 40 percent of American adults have not received a flu shot this year and don't plan to do so.

That's despite pleas from federal, state and local health officials following a 2017 virus that killed 80 thousand people, making it the deadliest flu season in decades.

And while the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) reports only sporadic flu activity in Illinois, medical professionals, like Amy Henderson, a physician's assistant with OSF HealthCare Medical Group, says the season could ramp up at any time. She says electing not to get a flu shot is not a good idea.

"I would highly suggest not doing that," says Amy Henderson, physician Assistant for OSF HealthCare Medical Group. "Especially for the children and elderly population. Also those with respiratory illnesses, such as asthma, COPD, thing of that nature - that are more susceptible to respiratory illness, making them more sick. I would really urge you to get your flu shot."

While getting a shot will not prevent you from getting the flu, the CDC reports those who received flu shots the past two seasons reduced their chances of getting the virus by 40 percent.

Also, even if you've had your flu shot, there are plenty of precautions you still should take.

"So obviously, when you're out in public and place where you're going to find a lot of people - whether it be the mall, the grocery store - use that hand hygiene, says Amy Henderson, physician assistant for OSF HealthCare Medical Group. "I always carry a little thing of hand sanitizer in my purse and I also have wipes in my purse - but I'm a little bit of a germophobe (laugh). You know, I use that frequently. So, if you're around people who are coughing, definitely ask them to cover their mouth. Cover your mouth if you're coughing - and the places that have a lot of people in them just be more cautious."

Finally, if you question getting a flu shot for yourself, think about your family, friends and co-workers. Their protection from the virus could be just as important, especially if they're a vulnerable group - like children or the elderly.