

Who is at the highest risk for getting seriously ill from influenza?

The ones who are at highest risk for influenza getting serious are the elderly - over 65 - and the very young. Middle-aged healthy people get influenza but they don't get that sick with it. If they have a risk factor - a chronic illness like diabetes or hypertension, COPD, heart failure or heart disease, they have some immunocompromised illness - then they can get pretty sick with influenza. So if you think about 30 million people, systems can get overwhelmed if too many people get too sick. :35

Influenza vaccine lessens symptoms in those who may get the flu

Vaccination prevents a lot of influenza. It does not prevent 100% for a variety of reasons but it prevents a lot of influenza. There's also good data that shows people who get the flu shot don't get as sick, their illness is more mild if they do get sick with influenza from strain maybe the vaccine doesn't fully protect from, but it might mitigate some of the symptomatology. :25

You don't get the flu from an influenza vaccination

Getting a flu shot will not increase your risk of getting Covid. Getting the flu shot will not give you influenza. Now, you can get a few minor side effects from the flu shot and those side effects are somewhat similar to symptoms of flu - muscle soreness, little bit of fever, little achiness, maybe a little fatigue - but it's not influenza. It's not the illness, it's just a little bit of a reaction from your immune system responding to the vaccine. :26

The best way to prevent yourself from getting sick is not being exposed to those who are

People with chronic illnesses, the elderly and the very young for influenza, they need to prevent exposure and the way they do that is to avoid people who are sick. The most common transmission of both these viruses is person to person via droplets, it's not touching something and touching yourself, the most common transmission is person to person. If you avoid people that are sick and if you avoid going out and being around people when you're sick both of those things mitigate the spread of the infection. :31

The more people who get vaccinated, the less spread there is of influenza

The virus travels through channels to spread from person to person. Every time someone gets vaccinated they shut down one channel, so the more people that get vaccinated, there are fewer channels that virus has to spread. :13

OSF HealthCare is prepared to handle flu season

If you prepare for these things and you're ready it's a lot easier to handle it. We're learning more and more every day about COVID-19, we've already learned a lot about influenza. What we can't predict is how virulent the influenza virus is going to be this year, how infective it's going to be. Flu seasons vary, some are worse than others and we can't really predict that. That's the one thing that worries me a little bit - is it going to be a really bad flu season, or are we going to be go fortunate and have a good season. But the one thing is we're prepared. :36

Good hand washing is vitally important

Even though the most common transmission is person to person via droplets there is a physical spread too, so hand washing is incredibly important. If I did if I have influenza or if I have Covid and I touch my mouth then I touch you, it can spread that way. So hand washing is incredibly important. Another reason I'm not overly concerned about flu season is I do believe that all the mitigation put forward to prevent the spread of Covid will have some impact on the spread of influenza. :34

Flu is a respiratory illness, not intestinal

Influenza A and B cause respiratory infections not gastroenteritis. So the flu is kind of a bad term. The flu shot does not protect you from nausea, vomiting, diarrhea from gastroenteritis. The flu shot protects you from influenza respiratory illness. :16