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National Health Orgs: Flu Shots Critical for Individuals with Diabetes, Heart and Lung Disease

During National Influenza Vaccination Week, experts encourage everyone 6 months and older to get vaccinated to reduce risk of severe illness and hospitalization

ARLINGTON, VA, BETHESDA, MD, CHICAGO, IL and DALLAS, TX — (December 1, 2025) — To kick off National Influenza Vaccination Week (December 1 - 6), the American Heart Association®, American Lung Association, American Diabetes Association® (ADA) and National Foundation for Infectious Diseases are urging everyone 6 months and older to get an annual flu vaccine.

This year's flu season follows a particularly difficult flu season. The 2024–2025 flu season was classified by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a *high severity* season across all age groups, with the highest flu hospitalization rate since the 2010-2011 season. Last year's flu season data revealed that [94.1% of adults and 53.5% of children and adolescents hospitalized with the flu had at least one underlying medical condition](#). This underscores the need for those who are at a higher risk for severe complications to get vaccinated against the flu each year, including:

- Adults aged 65 years and older;
- Pregnant individuals; and
- Individuals with chronic health conditions, including asthma, COPD, heart disease, diabetes and kidney disease.

"While the flu can be risky for anyone, people with diabetes are at higher risk for developing serious complications from the flu. The ADA recommends that everyone eligible living with diabetes get a flu vaccine. Getting vaccinated can help reduce the risk of getting the flu and related complications—for both you and your loved ones," said Rita Kalyani, MD, MHS, chief scientific and medical officer at the ADA.

"Flu vaccination is more than personal protection—it's protecting loved ones and a commitment to community health. Every flu shot helps prevent severe illness, hospitalizations, and even death, especially among older adults and those with chronic conditions. Getting your flu vaccine is a simple

step that delivers a powerful impact: safeguarding your health and the health of those around you,” said Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, Chief Medical Officer for Prevention, American Heart Association.

“Influenza is a respiratory illness, so people with lung diseases like asthma, COPD, pulmonary fibrosis, pulmonary hypertension and other lung diseases are at a significantly higher risk for severe illness, complications and hospitalization. The flu can also worsen existing chronic lung disease symptoms. In addition to people living with lung disease, their family members should also get vaccinated to help protect their loved ones,” said Harold Wimmer, President and CEO of the American Lung Association. “This holiday season, give yourself, your family and your community a gift of health by getting your annual flu shot, and talk to your healthcare provider about other critical respiratory virus vaccinations that are recommended for you.”

“Vaccination saves lives, and it’s on all of us to take action,” said NFID Medical Director Robert H. Hopkins Jr., MD. “For people with chronic conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, getting an annual flu vaccine is just as essential as eating well, exercising, and taking prescribed medications.” Even in years when the flu vaccine is not a perfect match, Dr. Hopkins says, it still helps prevent serious illness and hospitalizations. “The primary goal of flu vaccination is to reduce your likelihood of severe influenza. Vaccines don’t offer 100 percent protection, but not getting vaccinated leaves you with zero protection,” he says. December is **not** too late to get vaccinated. “As long as flu viruses are circulating, getting a flu vaccine can help protect you and those around you from serious illness—protection that matters even more during the busy holiday season.” For anyone with questions about flu vaccines, Hopkins encourages talking with a trusted healthcare professional.

The [American Heart Association](#), the [American Lung Association](#), the [American Diabetes Association](#) and the [National Foundation for Infectious Diseases](#) all offer educational resources on their websites about the burden of flu and the importance of vaccination for people with chronic health conditions.

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About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. Dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities, the organization has been a leading source of health information for more than one hundred years. Supported by more than 35 million volunteers globally, we fund groundbreaking research, advocate for the public’s health, and provide critical resources to save and improve lives affected by cardiovascular disease and stroke. By driving breakthroughs and

implementing proven solutions in science, policy, and care, we work tirelessly to advance health and transform lives every day. Connect with us on [heart.org](https://www.heart.org), [Facebook](#), [X](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

About the American Lung Association

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, which has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and is a Platinum-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: [Lung.org](https://www.lung.org).

About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to end diabetes and helping people thrive. This year, the ADA celebrates 85 years of driving discovery and research to prevent, manage, treat, and ultimately cure diabetes—and we're not stopping. There are 136 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Through advocacy, program development, and education, we're fighting for them all. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](https://www.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join us in the fight on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](#)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)). To learn more about how we are advocating for everyone affected by diabetes, visit us on X ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)).

About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Founded in 1973, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to educating and engaging the public, communities, and healthcare professionals about infectious diseases across the lifespan. The NFID "It's On Us" campaign calls on everyone to take action to help protect yourself and your community from severe respiratory illness: get vaccinated, follow simple healthy habits (wash hands often, stay home when sick, cover coughs and sneezes, and consider wearing a mask if you or someone at home is at higher risk), and get treated quickly with prescription medication when advised by a healthcare professional. NFID has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and has earned a Platinum transparency seal from Candid/GuideStar. For more information, visit www.nfid.org and <https://es.nfid.org/> (in Spanish).