

## Don't Tempt Fate – Get a Flu Shot This Season!

The latest flu season lasted well into Spring, making it the longest in a decade... and it came on the heels of one of the deadliest. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2017-18 was the most severe flu season in nearly 40 years, taking the lives of over 80,000 people.

With another season right around the corner, it's not a good idea to take chances with the influenza virus. A typical flu can cause fever, weakness, extreme fatigue, headache, sore throat, and runny nose, in addition to more dangerous symptoms.

Since the strains mutate, flu season can be unpredictable, making it important to get vaccinated each year. It's not too late once the season has begun, but it's most effective in earlier months like September or October. The vaccine can take two to three weeks to have full effect.

If you have not yet scheduled a wellness exam with your family doctor this year, it would be a great opportunity to take care of your checkup and flu shot at the same time. Alternately, many businesses offer on-site vaccination clinics, so it won't take you away from work.

While it's possible to experience a low-grade fever or temporary soreness from the shot, these side effects are minor compared to the flu's complications. The CDC recommends that **everyone** age 6 months or more (including pregnant women) should get a flu vaccine every year... so please don't put it off!



### Still on the Fence?

If you are still unsure about getting a flu shot, here's some more food for thought.

- Though people over 65 are at a higher risk, the flu can take a toll on younger, healthy people, too.
- The flu can have you feeling sick for a week or more, keeping you away from both work and fun.
- Everyone gets the flu from another person. If you have the flu virus, you are contagious one day before you begin to feel sick, and up to seven days after.
- The flu increases your risk of having a heart attack.
- If you get the flu after vaccination, you are less likely to have complications such as pneumonia.
- You cannot get the flu from the vaccine. The virus in the vaccine is dead, making it impossible to infect you.

SOURCES: NBC News, STAT News, MedicineNet, WebMD, NPR