

## October: Cold and Flu Season

It's that time again! The temperatures are cooler and the leaves are changing colors. Some of us see this as a welcome relief and others see it only for the colder days that are coming. So, what can we do to protect ourselves from all those "cold germs" that will be flying around out there?



You can reduce your risk of catching a cold or the flu by washing your hands frequently, which stops the spread of germs. Eating healthy, exercising and getting enough sleep also play a part in preventing colds and the flu because they help boost your immune system.

The best way to avoid getting the flu is to get the influenza vaccine. You should get the vaccine when it becomes available each fall (in October or November), but you can also get it any time throughout the flu season (into December, January and beyond). The vaccine is available by shot or by nasal spray. The vaccines work by exposing your immune system to the flu virus. Your body will build up antibodies to the virus to protect you from getting the flu.

Some people who get the vaccine will still get the flu, but they will usually get a milder case than people who aren't vaccinated. The vaccine is especially recommended for people who are more likely to get really sick from flu-related complications. Viruses cause the common cold and the flu. Over 200 different viruses can cause colds. There are not as many viruses that cause the flu. That's why there's a shot available for the flu and not for colds. The link below will provide additional information on the flu vaccine.

Get outside and enjoy the beauty of these fall days. Remember to take care of yourself to help prevent getting a cold or flu this winter!

[Influenza Vaccine](#)

