Stay in the Game.
Get Vaccinated.
Tackle the Flu
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
WWW.HEALTH.MO.GOV

INFLUENZA IS SERIOUS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is Influenza?	Influenza, or the flu, is a viral infection spread from person-to-person primarily by respiratory droplets created by coughing, sneezing, or talking. The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Complications of the flu can include ear and sinus infections, bronchitis, pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and congestive heart failure.
Why get a flu vaccine every year?	Flu viruses are constantly changing; flu vaccine may be updated from one season to the next to protect individuals against the most recent and most commonly circulating viruses. A person's protection from vaccination declines over time and an annual vaccination is needed and recommended for optimal protection.
Who should get the flu vaccine?	The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services recommends annual vaccination against flu for all people six months of age and older, unless they have a condition or medical reason not to get the vaccine. It is especially important for young children, pregnant women, older people and people with chronic health problems.
Can I get the flu from the vaccine?	No. The most common side effect associated with receiving a flu vaccine is a sore arm when receiving the flu shot. You are not fully protected from the flu until two weeks after receiving the vaccine.
If I had the flu already this season, am I protected for the rest of the year?	No. While you may have developed immunity against the virus that infected you, it doesn't guarantee that you have immunity against other flu viruses that are circulating the same season.
How long can I spread the flu to others?	Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 7 days **after** becoming sick. Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.
What can I do to protect myself from getting the flu?	• Wash your hands. • Get a flu vaccine each year. • Stay home when you are sick. • Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. • Avoid close contact with people who are sick. • Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

Protect yourself and others around you by getting a flu vaccine!

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