

You, Diabetes and

THE FLU

If you have diabetes, it disrupts the way your body gets or makes energy from food. Because you have this disease, the flu is more dangerous for you.

Why?

- ▶ Diabetes can weaken your body's ability to fight off the flu.
- ▶ Diabetes puts you at a greater risk of serious complications from the flu. If you get the flu, stress hormones will be activated, which will raise your blood sugar. This can make diabetes harder to manage.

To protect yourself from the flu, you need to get the flu shot.

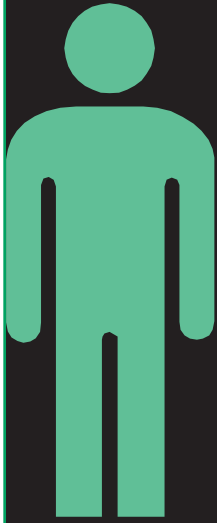
Is the flu a serious disease?

Yes. The flu is a virus that affects the lungs, throat, nose, and other parts of the body. Unlike the common cold, the flu comes on suddenly, makes you very sick for a week or longer, and it can send you to the hospital.

When a sick person coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets fly through the air. You can get sick from the droplets if they land in your nose, eyes, or mouth. You can also get the flu by touching a surface like a table or a doorknob that has flu virus on it, then touching your mouth or nose.

You can get the flu from others even when they don't feel sick. Staying away from people who look sick is not enough to protect you.

Each year in the United States, nearly 24,000 people die from the flu.▶



Why should I get the flu shot?

- ▶ To save your LIFE. Because you have diabetes, your risk of death or serious illness from the flu is higher than it is for most people.
- ▶ You are six times more likely to be hospitalized and three times more likely to die from the flu and pneumococcal illness than someone without diabetes.

The flu vaccine is quick, easy and safe protection.

Can the flu shot give me the flu?

No. This is not possible, because the shot is made with only dead flu virus.

Is the flu shot safe?

Yes. The flu shot is very safe; its benefits far outweigh any possible side effects.

Some people may have redness and soreness where they received the shot, but other side effects are rare.

Do I need to get the flu shot every year?

Yes. The flu virus changes every year, so the flu shot must change too. Because you have diabetes, you should be among the first to get your flu shot in the fall.

Should my family and friends get a shot, too?

Yes. Everyone can get the flu. When the people around you get the flu shot they not only protect themselves, they are less likely to spread the flu to you.

Should I get a pneumococcal (pneumonia) shot?

Yes. Just as you are at a higher risk for the flu, you are also at higher risk for pneumonia. Pneumonia is a serious complication of the flu and it can be life threatening. Unlike the flu shot, you will need to get the pneumococcal shot only once or twice in your lifetime.

How do I get the flu and pneumococcal (pneumonia) shots?

Talk to your doctor or contact your local health department.

For more information about the flu shot, visit: www.health.ny.gov/flu

Or, visit the New York State Department of Health's flu clinic locator during flu season.

