

# Young Adults and the H1N1 Flu Vaccine

## Vaccine Myths and Facts

**Myth: “I’m healthy and I never get sick; there is no reason for me to get the flu vaccine.”**

**Fact: Everyone is at risk of catching the H1N1 influenza (flu) virus**, including healthy young adults. The flu, either the H1N1 flu or the seasonal flu, can be a serious illness that can lead to hospitalization and death. Even if you are healthy and never get sick you can still carry the flu virus in your body and infect others.

**Myth: Vaccines don’t work.**

**Fact:** Some people who have been immunized get sick. This leads to the idea that vaccines don’t work. Because each individual is different, a small percentage of vaccinated people will not develop immunity to the disease, however, the H1N1 flu vaccine prevents the flu in the majority of healthy children and adults. **Getting a flu vaccine is still the BEST WAY to protect yourself from the flu and to prevent the spread of the flu virus.** This year there are two flu vaccines. The H1N1 flu vaccine protects against the new H1N1 flu virus and the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the regular seasonal flu viruses.

**Myth: The H1N1 flu outbreak has peaked, there’s no reason for me to get the flu vaccine now.**

**Fact: Getting the H1N1 flu vaccine is still very important.** By encouraging all Canadians to get the H1N1 flu vaccine, we hope to lessen the impact of the pandemic and a possible third wave of the H1N1 flu. Up to half of Canadians are probably still susceptible to the H1N1 flu because they have not already had the H1N1 flu or they have not got the H1N1 flu shot. Whether the flu activity in your community is high or low, getting the vaccine is still necessary in order to reduce the risk of serious illness and death. Moving forward, it is possible that the H1N1 flu virus will mutate and the adjuvanted vaccine may provide protection against some mutations in the H1N1 flu virus.

**Myth: Because the H1N1 flu vaccine is new, it is untested and unsafe.**

**Fact:** Careful research into the safety of ANY vaccine, including the H1N1 flu vaccine, is done prior to its widespread use. The requirements for vaccines to get approved for sale in Canada are strict. Every vaccine lot is safety-tested by the manufacturer and by Health Canada. Health Canada reviews all available test results, including international data, to ensure the vaccine is safe and effective before it is authorized for use in Canada.

To find out more, visit [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca) or call | 800 0-Canada (1-800-622-6232) (TTY 1-800-926-9105)



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### **Myth: The flu vaccine can make me sick.**

**Fact: You cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine.** Both the H1N1 flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine are made from dead flu viruses and they cannot cause infection.

### **Myth: There are many serious side effects from vaccines.**

**Fact:** Vaccines can have side effects but they are usually mild. **The risks of serious side effects from the flu, such as hospitalizations, are far greater than the risk of a serious reaction to the flu vaccine.** Common side effects of the H1N1 flu vaccine are soreness in the arm, itchiness, sore or red eyes, a mild fever and muscle aches. Most people experience no serious side effects from flu vaccines.

### **Myth: If I have been diagnosed with the H1N1 Flu Virus, will I still need a vaccine?**

**Fact:** In most cases, when a person is infected with a flu virus and recovers, they develop antibodies that provide them with immunity to that particular virus. Therefore, in the case of the H1N1 Flu Virus, the vaccine is not necessary for people who have had a **laboratory confirmed** case of the H1N1 flu.

### **Myth: Getting the H1N1 flu vaccine is complicated and takes too much time out of my day.**

**Fact:** On [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca) there are links to information about H1N1 vaccinations clinics near you being offered by your provincial or territorial government. Many doctors also have access to the H1N1 flu vaccine and can immunize their own patients by appointment.

### **Myth: There is a lot of accurate information available about vaccines online.**

**Fact:** There is a lot of information about vaccines available on the internet including on social media sites such as YouTube and Facebook. Some of it is accurate information from credible sources, and some of it is inaccurate information. **Here are some tips to help you decide on the trustworthiness or credibility of health information that can be found online.**

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### Tips on identifying trustworthy sources of information

Author's name or the name of the organization responsible is clearly stated

Author is a professional or accredited authority on the subject or clearly states their perspective on the subject (eg. "I'm a cancer survivor")

Author or organization is reputable

There is solid evidence provided (eg. scientific studies)

Lots of detail about the subject provided

Web site has original content

Information is reviewed and updated often enough given its content (For example, if it deals with the latest vaccine safety information has it been updated lately?)

The date of the last information update is clearly marked

Author's interest in developing and sharing the information is clearly stated (For example, a non-profit organization trying to promote a specific issue.)

No potential for bias or conflict of interest

All sides of an issue are represented

The site offers a clear statement that health information should not be taken as health advice or a substitute for visiting a health professional

For the most up-to-date information about the H1N1 flu vaccine and the H1N1 flu virus, visit [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca), call 1-800 O CANADA (TTY 1-800-926-9105) or access the Public Health Agency of Canada's social media applications at [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sm-ms](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sm-ms) or mobile applications at <http://m.phac.gc.ca/>.

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