



# News Release

Contact: [press@diabetes.org](mailto:press@diabetes.org)

## Leading Health Organizations Urge Flu Vaccination for Those at Higher Risk

*During National Influenza Vaccination Week, experts encourage everyone 6 months and older to get vaccinated to reduce risk of severe illness and hospitalization*

**ARLINGTON, Va. and BETHESDA, Md. and CHICAGO and DALLAS (Dec. 3, 2024)**— **According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, the 2023-2024 influenza (flu) season saw between 34 and 75 million flu cases, up to 900,000 hospitalizations, and as many as 100,000 deaths. December 2 – 6, 2024 is National Influenza Vaccination Week, and the American Heart Association®, American Lung Association, American Diabetes Association® (ADA) and National Foundation for Infectious Diseases are teaming up to urge everyone 6 months and older to get an annual flu vaccine.

In the U.S., flu season typically peaks between December and March. Although the best time to get vaccinated in the U.S. is typically in the fall before flu starts widely circulating, flu vaccination is still beneficial anytime during the season. It is important to get vaccinated before the holidays when people spend more time traveling and indoors with their families. Experts urge those who have not yet gotten a flu vaccine to do so as soon as possible.

The 2023-2024 flu season data revealed that **94.3% of adults and 71% of children and adolescents hospitalized with the flu** had at least one underlying medical condition. This underscores the need for those who are at a higher risk for severe complications to get vaccinated against the flu each year, including:

- Adults aged 65 years and older;
- Pregnant individuals; and
- Individuals with chronic health conditions, including asthma, COPD, heart disease, diabetes and kidney disease.

"The threat of influenza and COVID-19 is particularly significant for individuals with diabetes and/or obesity, especially since many people living with diabetes also experience additional complications such as heart disease and kidney disease. It is recommended that all eligible individuals, particularly those with diabetes, obesity, and other chronic illnesses, stay current with their annual vaccines, including the flu vaccine," stated Raveendhara Bannuru, M.D., Ph.D, FAGE, the ADA's vice president of medical affairs. "Get vaccinated to protect loved ones who are at higher risk for complications, even if you do not have diabetes or obesity."

"Getting your flu vaccine is one of the most effective and proven ways to protect yourself and those around you from severe illness, hospitalizations, and even death caused by influenza. Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce flu-related doctor visits and hospitalizations by 40–60% across all age groups. For older adults, children, and those with chronic health conditions, the flu vaccine is

---

2451 Crystal Drive  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22202

1-800-DIABETES (342-2383)

[diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org)  
[@AmDiabetesAssn](https://twitter.com/AmDiabetesAssn)



# News Release

especially critical, as these groups face higher risks of complications. With flu vaccination rates lagging pre-pandemic levels, it's more important than ever to prioritize this simple yet impactful preventive measure," said Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, the American Heart Association's chief medical officer for prevention.

"Last flu season, **35% of adults hospitalized** due to flu had a chronic lung disease. Since flu itself is a respiratory virus, it is imperative that people with a lung disease get vaccinated," said Albert Rizzo, M.D., chief medical officer for the American Lung Association. "Annual flu vaccination is essential to help protect against severe flu-related illness and reduce the burden on our healthcare system. By getting vaccinated, you are not only protecting yourself but also helping to prevent the spread of flu in your community."

According to a recent National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (**NFID**) survey, only 38% of US adults say they will definitely get a flu vaccine during the 2024-2025 season, despite 2 out of 3 (67%) agreeing that annual flu vaccination is the most effective way to prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths. Among US adults aged 18-64 years with at least one chronic health condition, only 46% received a flu vaccine last season, three percentage points lower than in 2022-2023 (49%), and four percentage points lower than in 2021-2022 (50%). "This downward trend is troubling because people who have chronic health conditions are more likely to develop serious and even life-threatening complications from flu," said NFID Medical Director Robert H. Hopkins, Jr., M.D. "Flu vaccines save lives, and getting vaccinated each year is the best line of defense to help protect yourself, your family, and your community from serious disease and potential complications." CDC estimates that during the 2023-2024 respiratory season, flu vaccination prevented 9.8 million flu-related illnesses, 120,000 flu-related hospitalizations, and 7,900 flu-related deaths.

The **American Heart Association**, the **American Lung Association**, the **American Diabetes Association** and the **National Foundation for Infectious Diseases** all offer educational resources on their websites about the burden of flu and the importance of vaccination for people with chronic health conditions.

###

## About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public's health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for a century. During 2024 - our Centennial year - we celebrate our rich 100-year history and accomplishments. As we forge ahead into our second century of bold discovery and impact our vision is to advance health and hope for everyone, everywhere. Connect with us on [heart.org](https://www.heart.org), [Facebook](#), [X](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

## About the American Lung Association

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung

2451 Crystal Drive  
Suite 900  
Arlington, VA 22202  
1-800-DIABETES (342-2383)

[diabetes.org](https://www.diabetes.org)  
[@AmDiabetesAssn](#)



# News Release

health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, which has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and is a Platinum-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: [Lung.org](http://Lung.org).

## About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to end diabetes and helping people thrive. For 84 years, the ADA has driven discovery and research to prevent, manage, treat, and ultimately cure diabetes. There are 136 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Through advocacy, program development, and education, we're fighting for them all. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](#)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)).

## About the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Founded in 1973, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to educating and engaging the public, communities, and healthcare professionals about infectious diseases across the lifespan. NFID promotes a Take 3 approach to help prevent respiratory illnesses: 1) Get vaccinated; 2) Practice healthy habits to help stop the spread of infectious diseases (wash hands often, stay home when sick, cover coughs and sneezes, and consider wearing a mask if you or a household member are at increased risk of severe illness); 3) Treat with prescription medication if recommended by a healthcare professional. NFID has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and has earned a Platinum transparency seal from Candid/GuideStar. For more information, visit [www.nfid.org](http://www.nfid.org) and <https://es.nfid.org/> (in Spanish).