



HOW **NOT** TO GET THE FLU

STEP:

1

GET YOUR SHOT

Contrary to what you may have heard, you cannot get the flu from a vaccination. The flu shot contains killed viruses: type A, type B and type C. Getting a flu shot doesn't guarantee that you won't get the flu, because matching up the vaccine with the viruses from any particular year is difficult. However, if you do get a flu shot and come down with the flu sometime during flu season, the vaccination will reduce your risk of dying. In fact, the risk is reduced even more if you get shots in consecutive years.

Before you get a flu shot:

- Get plenty of sleep. A lack of sleep prior to getting a flu shot reduces the vaccination's effectiveness.
- Do not take aspirin, NSAIDS (such as ibuprofen), or COX-2 inhibitors, as these also reduce the vaccination's effectiveness.
- Notify your doctor if you are allergic to eggs. Flu vaccine is cultivated in eggs and could potentially produce an allergic reaction.
- Don't procrastinate: Get vaccinated today (ASAP)!

STEP:

2

BUILD UP YOUR IMMUNITY

1. Get 8 hours of sleep every night.

Sleep deprivation wreaks havoc on your immune system, so get plenty of sleep to boost your immunity to illness. If you have trouble sleeping, try the following:

- Sleep in a cool, dark room.
- Use a sleep mask.
- Turn off the TV one hour before you go to bed.

3. Eat healthful foods.

A healthful diet is important for good health and immunity to illness, so eat five or more helpings of fruits and vegetables every day. Include plenty of beta-carotene rich foods such as apricots, carrots, papayas, cantaloupe, spinach, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and mangoes. If possible, eat two or more meals a week of fatty fish such as salmon, sardines and mackerel. Eat plenty of garlic and spicy foods, as well as raw yogurt and/or take probiotics.



- Meditate.
- Don't worry about little things.
- Try taking melatonin.

2. Exercise.

Regular exercise has been proven to boost the immune system, so exercise for at least 45 minutes, five days a week.

4. Take vitamins.

Choose immunity-building vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, including a multivitamin, zinc, magnesium, vitamin E, selenium and alpha lipoid acid. In addition, try turmeric, garlic and CoQ10 supplements.

STEP:

3

AVOID INFECTION

The flu is contagious one day before symptoms appear and up to five days afterward. Droplets from the mouth and nose spread influenza, so when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or touches any surface, the virus is spread. In addition, viruses can live on a cold surface for three days. Follow these guidelines to reduce the risk of infection:

1. Wash your hands frequently.

If you are unsure about how long is "long enough," wash your hands for the length of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" to yourself twice. Make sure to wash your hands before eating, after sneezing or coughing in your hands, after shaking someone's hand, and after touching anything at all that could be contaminated. To get the maximum benefit from handwashing, use hot water, soap, and a follow-up hand sanitizer such as Purell.

2. Avoid touching anything that could be contaminated.

Flu season is a good time to be somewhat obsessive about not touching contaminated surfaces. Try not to touch things that

are used frequently by others, such as doorknobs, handrails, "community" keypads or pens. Consider wearing gloves when pushing a shopping cart, or using a paper towel to open the door of a public restroom after you have washed your hands. Try to avoid shaking hands with others. Carry a hand sanitizer with you (and use it frequently), and train yourself to not touch your nose, mouth, or eyes.

3. Avoid "droplets."

Avoid crowds if possible, and stay away from people who are coughing or obviously sick. Try to fly less frequently, as one sick person on an airplane can infect all passengers.

4. Buy a flu mask.

In case of an epidemic, you'll be prepared.

For a printable version of this poster, go to eldr.com/flu.