

Flu Prevention & Food Allergy

Have a food allergy? Should you get vaccinated for flu?



The best way to prevent flu is to get vaccinated. Because the flu virus changes, it is important to get newly vaccinated every year. This season is unique because you could be exposed to two different viruses: the **seasonal flu** and the completely new **H1N1 (“Swine”) flu**. This 2009 H1N1 flu is very contagious and expected to infect even more people than the usual seasonal flu.

Everyone who can get vaccinated, should get vaccinated.

However, getting a flu vaccine can be impossible for people allergic to egg because current flu vaccines are grown in chicken egg cells.

If you are allergic to eggs, talk to your doctor about whether it is possible to get vaccinated.

All of the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu vaccines in the United States this year contain chicken egg cells. If you are allergic to egg, it is recommended that you do **not** receive seasonal flu or H1N1 flu vaccine unless you speak with your doctor about special arrangements.

Other ways of preventing flu:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds every time.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (with a tissue or your upper shirt sleeve). Throw out used tissues.
- Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing, or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

If you might be allergic to any other vaccine ingredients, you should **not** receive the seasonal flu or H1N1 flu vaccines. Talk to your doctor about your concerns and ask to check the ingredients listed in the package insert.

If you have food allergies and also have asthma, you might be more likely to have serious complications if you get the flu because it affects the respiratory system. Talk to your doctor about the best ways to prevent flu for you.



For more information, contact AAFA New England:

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