



# *Health Matters*

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Article Source: [Healthline](#)

## Get Your Flu Vaccine to Avoid a "Twindemic"

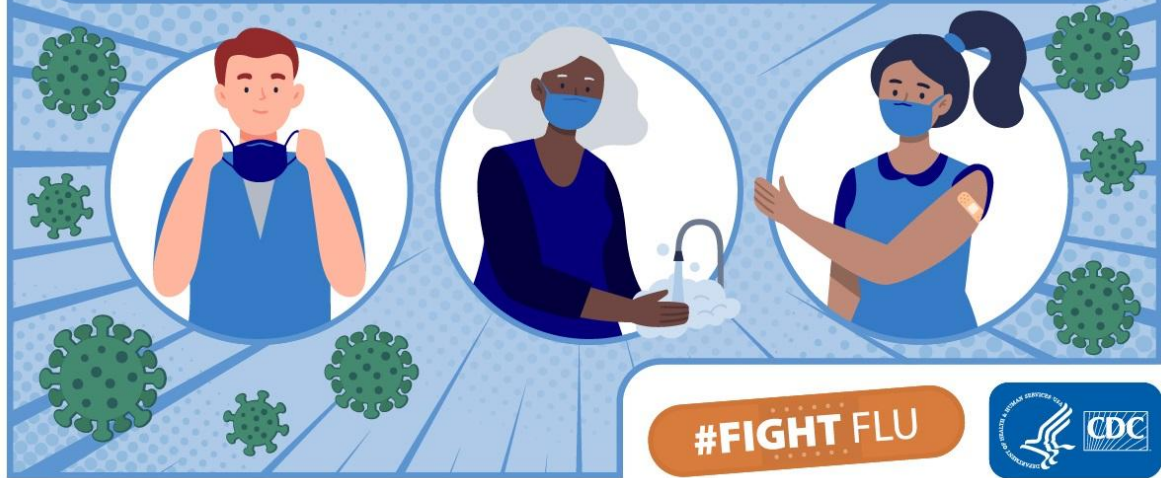
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It is safe to get both the COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time.

Flu season is once again around the corner! Although getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is more important than ever, it does not replace getting vaccinated for the flu as well. It is possible—and potentially deadly—to contract both viruses at the same time.

# MASK UP, LATHER UP, SLEEVE UP

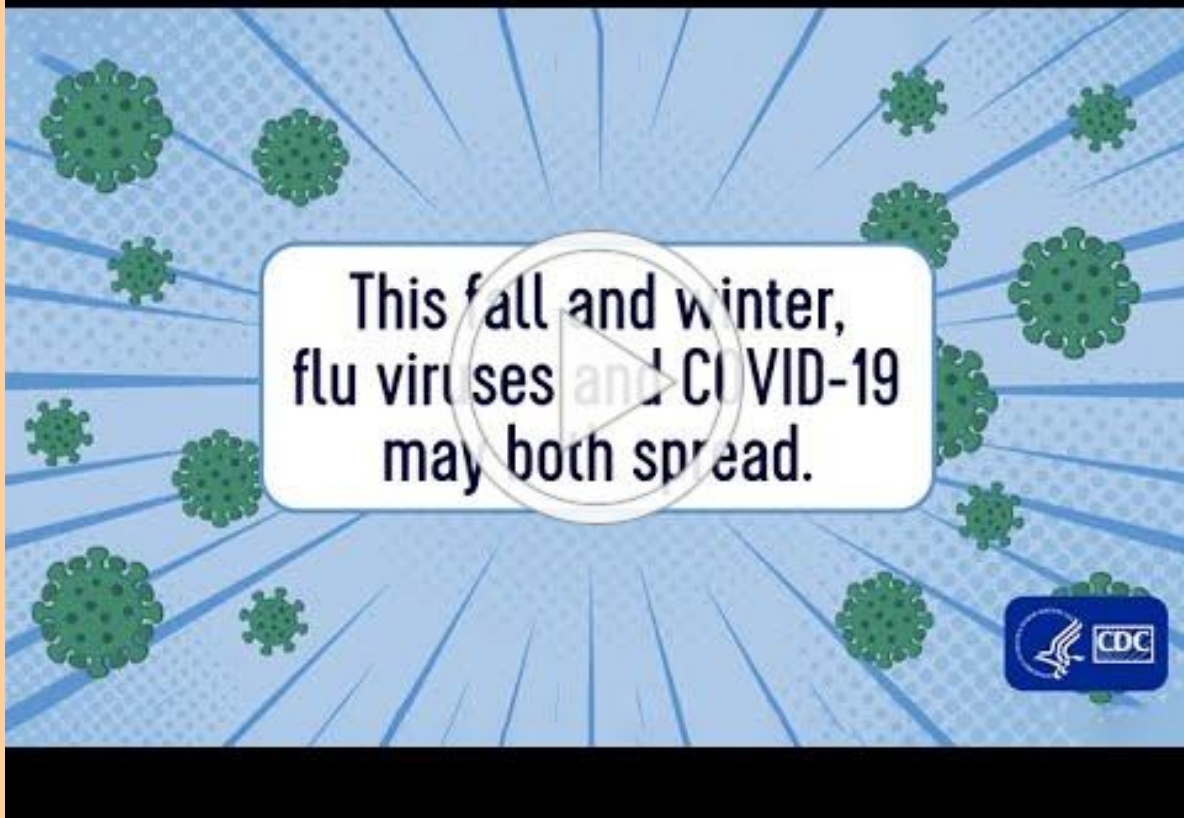


After last year's relatively mild flu season, many people may be wondering if getting a flu shot is essential this year. There may also be concerns about how far apart flu and COVID-19 vaccines should be spaced out.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [confirmed](#) in its 2021-2022 flu season guidance that, **yes, it is safe to get the COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time.**

"Getting a flu vaccine is an essential part of protecting your health and your family's health every year. Take recommended [precautions](#) to protect yourself from COVID-19 while getting your flu vaccine," the CDC wrote.

Wearing a mask, physical distancing, and frequent hand washing also offer protection from respiratory viruses, such as flu and COVID-19, but the most effective prevention strategy to getting sick remains getting your recommended vaccinations, including the annual flu shot and COVID boosters when you become eligible.



## October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Ask your doctor  
when you should get a  
mammogram.

Article Source: [CDC](#)

[Breast cancer](#) is the second most common cancer among American women after cancers of the skin. Advancing technology has also made breast cancer more survivable than in decades past, but outcomes are best when it is caught early. The surest way to detect the early signs of breast cancer, before any symptoms develop, is through regular [mammogram](#) screenings.

### Fast Facts About Breast Cancer

- About 255,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States every year, and 42,000 women die from it.
- [Men can get breast cancer](#), too, but it is not very common. About 1 in 100 breast cancers in the United States are diagnosed in men.
- While the risk of breast cancer increases with age, particularly after age 50, it does occur in [younger women](#).

### What Are the Symptoms?

[Symptoms of breast cancer](#) vary, and some people have no symptoms at all. Symptoms can include—

- Any change in the size or the shape of the breast.
- Pain in any area of the breast.
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk (including blood).
- A new lump in the breast or underarm.
- If you have any signs that worry you, see your doctor right away.

### What Are the Risk Factors?

- Being a woman.
- Being older. Most breast cancers are found in women who are 50 years old or older.
- Having changes in your BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes.

### How Can I Lower My Risk?

You can do things to help [lower your breast cancer risk](#).

- Keep a healthy weight and exercise regularly.
- Don't drink alcohol, or limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- If you are taking hormone replacement therapy or birth control pills, ask your doctor about the risks.
- Breastfeed your children, if possible.

## Protecting Your Unvaccinated Family Members

### What You Need to Know

- If you've been [fully vaccinated](#) against COVID-19, you've taken the first step toward protecting yourself and your family and [returning to many of the activities](#) you did before the pandemic.
- To maximize protection from the Delta variant, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area [of substantial or high transmission](#). As of the end of September, the entire state of Connecticut is considered to be in **high transmission**.
- Wearing a mask is most important if you or someone in your household has a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you or they are at [increased risk for severe disease](#). If this applies to you or your household, you might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission.

### How can I protect my unvaccinated family members?

These are the best ways to protect your unvaccinated family members, including children who cannot get vaccinated yet:

- Get [vaccinated](#) yourself. COVID-19 vaccines reduce the risk of getting COVID-19 and spreading it to others.
- Be sure to get everyone in your family who is 12 years or older vaccinated against COVID-19 as well.
- Wear a [mask](#).
  - To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, have everyone in your family, even those who are vaccinated, wear a mask indoors in public while spread remains high or substantial in our area.
  - You might choose to have everyone in your family, even those who are vaccinated, wear a mask indoors in public regardless of the level of transmission.
- Unvaccinated family members, including children 2 years and older, should wear a mask in all indoor public settings.
  - To set an example, you also might choose to wear a mask yourself

- Do NOT put a mask on children younger than 2 years old.

How do I protect a family member who has a condition or is taking medications that weaken their immune system?

- Get vaccinated to reduce the risk that you get sick and exposure your family member at home.
- People with weakened immune systems may not be fully protected from COVID-19, even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you live with someone who has a weakened immune system or is at [increased risk for severe disease](#), you might choose to wear a mask in all indoor public settings regardless of the level of transmission.

Choose safer activities for your family.

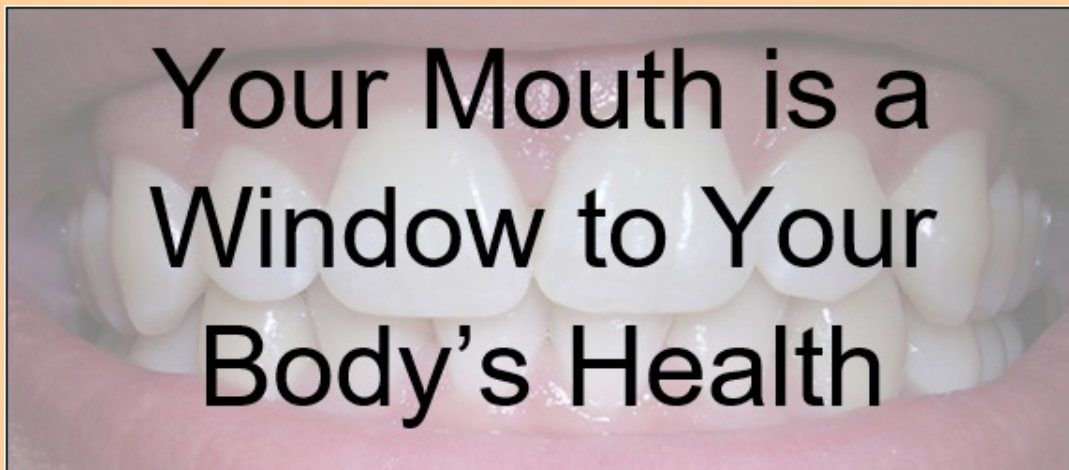
- Outdoor [activities](#) are safer than indoor ones. If you are indoors, choose a location that is [well ventilated](#), for example a room with open windows, and [know when to wear a mask](#).
- Avoid activities that make it hard to stay 6 feet away from others.
- If your family member is younger than 2 years old and cannot wear a mask, limit visits with people who are not vaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown and keep distance between your child and other people in public.

Article Source: [CDC](#)

Looking for a vaccine?

Children In School?

## Keep Your Teeth Health this Halloween!



Dental health is an important part of your personal health regime. Your mouth is a “window” to your body’s overall health. Your mouth is filled with a variety of bacteria. Some of these bacteria can cause tooth decay and periodontal disease. Other oral bacteria can contribute to heart disease, stroke and bacterial pneumonia.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) the impact of dental disease in America is extensive.

- 1 in 4 adults have untreated cavities
- 46% of adults show signs of early gum disease
- \$124 Billion is spent annually on dental care
- 34 million school hours are lost annually due to dental urgent care

**Your mouth may also show the first signs of disease or deficiency in other parts of your body. Examples include:**

- Mouth ulcers can be the sign of a vitamin C deficiency
- Pale gums can be the sign of iron deficiency
- Bleeding gums can be an early sign of pregnancy or early sign of diabetes
- Dry gums can be a sign of autoimmune disease like Sjogren's Disease or Lupus

**Good dental hygiene can be easy! Here is how to take care of your oral health:**

- Brush your teeth twice daily for 2 – 3 minutes
- Floss daily to reach the parts of your gums your toothbrush can't
- Eat a varied, nutrient rich diet with plenty of Vitamin C and A as these are essential for healthy teeth and gums
- Avoid smoking or vaping
- Limit your alcohol intake
- See your dentist at least twice yearly for cleanings and dental exams
- See your dentist right away if you have unusual oral symptoms like pain, swelling, bad breath, mouth ulcers, red swollen gums or sore jaw.

# 6 Ways to Care for Your Mouth

*That Help You Stay Healthy*



**Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.** Keeping your teeth and gums clean can prevent cavities and gum disease.



**Visit the dentist regularly.** Checkups can find tooth decay, gum disease, and other problems before they lead to more serious issues like tooth loss.



**Drink fluoridated water** to keep teeth strong and reduce cavities.



**Avoid all forms of tobacco and limit alcohol.** Smokers have twice the risk of gum disease compared to nonsmokers. Excessive alcohol use combined with tobacco use causes at least 75% of head and neck cancers.



**Avoid sugary snacks and drinks,** which can lead to tooth decay, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems.



**If you have diabetes, work with your doctor** to keep your blood sugar close to your target level. High blood sugar increases the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

Learn more about how good oral health is important for overall health at [www.cdc.gov/oralhealth](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth).



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION  
@CDCChronic | [www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease](http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease)

## Halloween Candy Tips for Parents

Healthy choices and Halloween don't seem like they would go hand-in-hand, but sustainable, healthy living for children as well as adults needs to include flexibility on allowing ourselves to partake in the things we enjoy. For children still learning how to practice moderation, it can be important to set limits.



Here are some more tips for handling the Halloween candy:

- Eat a healthy meal before going out Trick-or-Treating. Starting on a full stomach will help curb the temptation to over-indulge on Halloween night.
- Be lenient about candy eating on Halloween within reason, but have a discussion about how the remaining candy should be consumed. Set ground rules around mealtimes and limits to how much can be stored in the child's bedroom.
- If your child has collected a large amount of candy, consider buying back some or all of their stash in exchange for spending money or a break from their usual household chores. This acknowledges the candy belongs to the child while incentivizing holding back on consumption.
- Make yourself a role model by practicing moderation in your own candy consumption. Reduce temptation by stocking up as close to Halloween as possible, and only buying what you anticipate will be given away by the end of the night.

Every child is different, and you know yours best. Some can be trusted to consume candy responsibly over time while others will need you to set rules for them. Use it as a learning opportunity for balancing temptation with later reward where appropriate.

At the end of the day, Halloween, like other holidays, is a single day on the calendar. A little overindulgence may be due. As long as your family maintains a healthy diet during the rest of the year, a few days of leniency will have no lasting impact.

[Article Source](#)

Picture Source: NY Post

**The health department strives to prevent disease outbreaks and conditions that give rise to poor health, promote health programs and policies that support good health, and protect members of our community from health threats.**

