**Having Doubts About Getting This Year’s Flu Shot? Here’s Why You Shouldn’t**

Flu season is coming! Hopefully, this means that your company has an [onsite flu clinic](https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohll/2017/09/06/how-to-plan-a-flu-shot-clinic-for-your-employees/#31f06b717aa5) coming up. If you are having doubts about participating in this year’s flu clinic, we want to help you realize just how important receiving your [annual flu shot](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/the-flu-vs.-the-flu-shot-which-side-will-you-pick-this-flu-season) is.

We know that the flu shot have gotten a bad rap in the past years. Common [misconceptions](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/the-perfect-storm-of-flu-season-complacency) have caused many Americans to shy away from getting vaccinated. Many also underestimate the health risks from the flu. Regardless of some of the things you’ve heard about the vaccine, it’s important to know that getting a flu shot is your #1 defense against the flu.

So, if you have any doubts about participating in this year’s flu shot clinic, read this first:

**Doubt #1: I’ve heard a lot of negative things about the vaccine.**

Are you doubtful about getting your flu shot this year because you’ve heard horror stories about the flu shot gone wrong? It’s important to educate yourself on the vaccine and separate the facts vs. myths about the flu shot. Here are some flu shot *facts* that might ease your doubts about getting vaccinated:

*The vaccine is safe.* The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) hold vaccines to the highest safety standards and the vaccine is closely monitored. The flu shot is always safer than the complications of influenza.

If you doubt the safety of flu shots because you’ve heard that the vaccine causes Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS), don’t. The chance of this complication from the flu shot is *extremely* rare, and you’re actually more likely to increase your risk of GBS from falling ill with influenza itself.

In fact, according to the [GBS/CIPD Foundation International](https://www.gbs-cidp.org/ecomm/flu-shots-and-gbs/), “the GBS risk from the flu itself is most likely greater than that of the vaccine.” They also state that, “your risk of GBS actually goes down when you get the vaccine because it prevents the flu.”

*The flu shot doesn’t cause the flu.* The myth that the flu shot will give you the flu has been debunked time and time again. The vaccine is made from a dead or inactive virus that can no longer spread its fever-spiking properties. In rare cases, a person may experience a mild reaction to the shot that includes a low-grade fever, but these reactions are not the flu.

*You still need a flu shot even if you got one last year.* Your flu shot from last year won’t protect you this year. The dominant flu strains change from year to year, so getting vaccinated annually is what keeps you protected.

*You need a flu shot regardless of your age or health status.* Being young and healthy doesn’t mean you aren’t susceptible to the flu. It also doesn’t mean that your flu symptoms will be minor if even you do get the flu. Why risk it?

**Doubt #2: I don’t want to deal with a sore arm.**

Not wanting to deal with any [soreness from the flu shot](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/how-to-avoid-a-sore-arm-after-your-flu-shot)? We get it. Up to 64% of adults and children who receive the flu shot experience pain and/or soreness at the site of the injection, making it the most common side effect of the vaccine.

While we definitely understand that arm tenderness and soreness can be frustrating, it’s not worth the risk of the aches and pains you’ll feel from the flu. Arm soreness typically only lasts for one or two days. And luckily, there are a few things you can do to help prevent and soothe a sore arm from a flu shot. Try out some of these tips:

* Relax your arm when getting the shot
* Take some ibuprofen or Tylenol
* Use your arm afterwards – don’t “baby” it!
* Use cold and/or warm compresses

**Doubt #3: I’m not sure if the flu shot is worth it.**

A good way to ease your nervousness about getting a flu shot is to realize that it’s worth it. About [200,000](http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/flu-statistics) Americans are hospitalized every year due to complications from the flu. These hospitalizations and outpatient doctors visits related to the flu cost an average of [$10 billion](http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/flu-statistics).

Contrary to what you might have heard, the flu is more than just a “really bad cold” – it can lead to hospitalization, high medical bills, and even death in some cases. It’s really nothing to leave up to chance. Not to mention, by not receiving your flu shot, you’re putting others around you at risk as well.

Put an end to your doubts by educating yourself about the flu and the vaccine. Talk to your physician if you have any hesitations about getting the flu shot. Help protect yourself, your family, and your colleagues by receiving a flu shot this year.