

QuickBites



Facts About the Flu

Flu season is nearly here. Influenza or seasonal flu is a serious disease. It is a respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. The annual flu shot is the best way to reduce the chances you will get flu and spread it to others.

- When more people get vaccinated, less flu can spread through the community.
- Encourage friends and loved ones to get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine becomes available.
- Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk for flu complications and their close contacts.

9 Flu Myths

Seasonal flu is a serious disease that causes illness, hospitalizations and deaths every year in the United States. When it's flu season, take the necessary steps to stay healthy. That includes separating fact from myth.

Flu Myth #1 For most healthy people, having seasonal flu is like having a really bad cold.

No. It's worse than that. Usually much worse.

For one, you feel terrible. In addition to the congestion and cough, you're apt to have severe fatigue, body aches and fever. For some, the flu can be even more serious. The seasonal flu sends 200,000 people to the hospital in the U.S. each year. The CDC estimates that 111 million workdays are lost due to flu each flu season.

Flu Myth #2 The flu shot can give you the flu.

No. A flu shot cannot give you the flu. Flu vaccines given with a needle are made in one of two ways:

- The vaccine is made with "inactivated" viruses that are not infectious, or
- It is made with no flu vaccine viruses at all, which is the case for recombinant influenza vaccine.

Flu Myth #3 The nasal spray flu vaccine can give you the flu.

No. The nasal spray vaccine cannot give you the flu. The viruses in the nasal spray flu vaccine are attenuated or weakened and they cannot cause the flu.

Flu Myth #4 If you had the flu last year you don't need to be vaccinated this year. Your body has built up enough immunity.

Maybe, but probably not. Many different flu viruses circulate each flu season. While some stay the same from season to season, there will be different viruses in the mix too. Plus, immunity lessens over time. It's best to get vaccinated at the beginning of flu season each year.

Flu Myth #5 If you have the flu with a fever that lasts more than a day or two, call your doctor for a round of antibiotics.

No. Antibiotics work well against bacteria, but they aren't effective for a viral infection like the flu. Then again, some people develop a bacterial infection as a complication of the flu, so it may be a good idea to get checked out if your symptoms drag on or worsen.

Flu Myth #6 Pregnant women should not get the flu vaccine.

No. Vaccination helps protect women during pregnancy and their babies for up to six months after they are born. One study showed that giving flu vaccine to pregnant women was 92% effective in preventing hospitalization of infants for flu. Pregnant women or people with pre-existing medical conditions who get vaccinated should get the flu shot and not the flu nasal spray vaccine.

Flu Myth #7 The stomach flu is one type of influenza.

No. Many people use the term “stomach flu” to describe illnesses with nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. These symptoms may be caused by variety of viruses, bacteria or parasites. While vomiting and diarrhea can sometimes be part of seasonal flu symptoms, these problems are rarely the main symptoms. Seasonal flu is a respiratory disease and not an intestinal disease.

Flu Myth #8 Feed a cold, starve a fever.

If you have the flu (or a cold) and a fever, you need more fluids. There’s little reason to increase or decrease how much you eat. Though you may have no appetite, “starving” yourself will accomplish little. And poor nutrition will not help you get better.

Flu Myth #9 “The flu vaccine doesn’t work. My cousin got a flu shot and still came down with the flu.”

It is possible to get the flu if you have been vaccinated. This can happen for the following reasons:

- You may be exposed to a flu virus shortly before getting vaccinated or during the two weeks afterwards. This may mean that you’ll get the flu before the vaccine begins to protect you.
- You may be exposed to a flu virus that was not included in the current season’s flu vaccine. There are many different flu viruses that circulate every year. The flu vaccine is made to protect against the three or four flu viruses that are likely to be the most common.
- Unfortunately, some people can become infected with a flu virus the flu vaccine is designed to protect against, despite getting vaccinated. In general, the flu vaccine works best among healthy younger adults and older children. Some older people and people with certain chronic illnesses may develop weaker immunity after vaccination.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/misconceptions.htm>

Avgolemono Soup – Greek Lemon and Egg Soup with Chicken Makes 4 servings.

While soup can neither prevent nor cure seasonal flu, this lemony broth certainly feels restorative. Based on the favorite Greek lemon/egg sauce called avgolemono, this easy recipe makes a superb first course or main course.

INGREDIENTS

4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 whole egg + 1 egg white, beaten together
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
1 1/2 cups cooked orzo or rice
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 cup (5 oz) shredded cooked chicken
4 thin slices fresh lemon

NUTRITION INFO PER SERVING

166 Calories	19g Carbohydrate
2g Fat	0.3g Fiber
1g Saturated fat	411mg Sodium
17g Protein	



Recipe Source: Alere Kitchens

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, gently heat broth to a low simmer. Meanwhile, whisk together eggs, 1 teaspoon of the cornstarch, and the salt and pepper. Whisk into the hot broth. Stir in orzo or rice. Heat until steaming, stirring often. Do not let the soup boil.
2. In a small bowl, stir together lemon juice and the remaining 1 teaspoon cornstarch. Stir this mixture into the soup. Add diced chicken. Heat gently until the soup is steaming. Do not let it boil.
3. Ladle the soup into bowls. Garnish with a slice of lemon and serve.