



Clinical Guidance

Flu, COVID, and RSV

Overview

In the winter months it is common to get sick from viruses including flu, COVID-19, and RSV. Vaccine season is here, and this year includes the annual flu shot, the updated COVID-19 booster, and a new RSV vaccine for certain at-risk groups. Here is an overview of what you need to know to protect your health this season.

Flu

- ▶ Everyone over the age of 6 months should get the annual flu vaccine, with only rare exceptions. In addition, the flu vaccine is safe and recommended for those who are pregnant.
- ▶ Flu vaccine can reduce illnesses, visits to the doctor, and missed work or school days. It also protects the people at highest risk, reducing the likelihood of hospitalizations and fatalities.
- ▶ Beginning this season, people with egg allergies can get any available flu vaccine that is otherwise appropriate for their age.

- ▶ For those over age 65, there are preferred flu vaccines that are more effective than the standard dose and are widely available.

COVID

- ▶ Vaccination continues to be the most effective measure for preventing COVID-related hospitalizations and fatalities, while also lowering the risk of experiencing long-term effects of COVID.
- ▶ The virus that causes COVID constantly evolves, and the protection afforded by prior vaccinations decreases over time, which makes staying current with vaccination very important.

- ▶ Updated COVID booster vaccines are available, which provide enhanced protection against the variants that are currently causing illnesses this winter.
- ▶ The COVID vaccine can be given at the same time as your flu shot.
- ▶ Paxlovid is a treatment for COVID-19 that must be started within 5 days of onset of symptoms. It is approved for adults over age 18 who are at high risk for severe COVID illness or hospitalization (e.g., specific medical conditions, unvaccinated). Please consult with your physician or reach out to [Summus](#) to determine if Paxlovid is right for you.
- ▶ There are new vaccines available to help protect these three age groups:
 - Pregnant women between 32–36 weeks, can receive a vaccine, through January, to protect their baby from severe RSV.
 - Infants born during the RSV season, or those whose mothers did not receive vaccination during pregnancy, can receive an RSV antibody to help protect against severe RSV.
 - Adults age 60 and over may benefit from an RSV vaccine specific for their age group. They should discuss with their primary care physician to determine if it is appropriate for them to receive at this time.

RSV

- ▶ RSV is a virus that commonly occurs during winter and can cause serious illness in babies, young children, and older adults.