

Live Well Work Well

October 2023



South Brunswick School District

What to Know About This Year's Flu Season

Influenza (flu) season lasts from October through May in the United States, with peak flu activity between December and March. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the timing and duration of flu activity have been unpredictable. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported early increases in seasonal flu last year. The Southern Hemisphere also experienced an early surge of flu activity this year, which may indicate what's to come in the United States.

Furthermore, health experts anticipate another wave of respiratory viral infections this fall, namely from the flu, the virus that causes COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Fortunately, vaccines for all three viruses will be available for the first time in the fall. [Vaccinations](#) have been shown to reduce hospitalizations and death and may be particularly beneficial for those with compromised health.

Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests

Starting September 25, 2023, free at-home COVID-19 tests will once again be available to order through [COVIDTests.gov](https://www.COVIDTests.gov). At-home tests are a tool to help stop the spread, avoid hospitalizations, and defend against serious illness. Order at [COVIDTests.gov](https://www.COVIDTests.gov).

Tips for Staying Healthy

The flu can cause serious complications for people of any age, but children and older adults are especially vulnerable. To help keep your [household healthy](#) this flu season, consider the following tips:

- Vaccination is your best chance of preventing the flu. The CDC recommends that anyone 6 months and older get a flu shot every year. The flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same visit.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay away from others when you feel unwell. Because flu and COVID-19 symptoms are similar, doctors suggest testing to know what you have.
- Wash your hands often using soap and warm water to protect against germs. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Sleep well, stay active, and drink plenty of water to keep your immune system strong.
- Eat a diet of grains, fruits, vegetables, and fiber.

September and October are the best months to get vaccinated against the flu—make an appointment for your no-cost flu vaccine today. See the attached flyer or log into the [Aetna member website](#) to get started.

Visit our [Benefits Online website](#) for more wellness info at the Staff Portal.



Where Are the Germiest Places?

Germes are a part of life—and they're everywhere. The dry air associated with fall and winter also makes it easier for germs to spread and linger in the air. Here are some germ hot spots:

- **Home**—Remote controls, kitchen counters, bathroom fixtures and handles, sponges, and toothbrush holders
- **Workplace**—Desktops, keyboard, mouse, chair armrests, writing tools, handles, switches, and doorknobs
- **School**—Water fountains, doorknobs, desks and tables, shared school supplies, cafeterias, and playgrounds

Hand-washing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs, especially after sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose.



Stocking a Nutritious Kitchen

You don't need to master the art of meal planning to [eat well](#) during the week. It can be as simple as stocking your kitchen with mealtime building blocks. Consider keeping these nutritious pantry, fridge, and freezer staples on hand to make healthy eating easy:

- **Canned chickpeas** can easily be added to soups or mashed with seasonings for extra protein and fiber.
- **Chicken breast** is a great protein to build a meal around. You could make pasta, soups, casseroles, sandwiches, and more.
- **Extra-firm tofu** is full of plant-based protein and calcium. Its neutral flavor makes it great for stir-fries and curries.
- **Quinoa or lentils** are versatile options to round off meals. They are packed with fiber and protein.
- **Whole-wheat spaghetti** is a great last-minute meal idea. It has a sizable dose of fiber and helps reduce cholesterol.
- **Frozen spinach** can easily go in egg dishes, pasta, or smoothies. It is packed with four times the nutrients of fresh spinach.



Healthy Recipe Leafy Tofu

With these healthy basics on hand, you can toss together nutritious meals that require minimal effort. *Makes: 6 servings*

Ingredients

- 1 package tofu
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 4 cups fresh spinach
- 2 Tbsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds

Preparations

1. Drain the tofu. Dice it into 1-inch cubes.
2. Tear the spinach into bite-sized pieces.
3. In a large pan, heat the oil and saute the tofu cubes for a few minutes. Move the tofu to the center of the pan.
4. Add the spinach and soy sauce. Mix.
5. Cover the pan and cook until the spinach is wilted.
6. Sprinkle on the sesame seeds.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total calories	77
Total fat	5 g
Protein	7 g
Sodium	216 mg
Carbohydrate	2 g
Dietary fiber	1 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Total sugars	1 g

Source: MyPlate



Your flu shot is covered

Your no-cost flu shot helps protect you and those you love.

Getting your flu shot early is one of the best ways to build your immunity. The vaccine is safe and effective, and helps protect you and those around you. You can even get your flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.

Who needs a flu shot?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone six months and older should get a flu shot every season with rare exceptions.¹

Getting vaccinated is especially important for high-risk individuals:

- Pregnant people
- Children under the age of five
- School-aged children
- Older adults
- Professionals in settings with high infection rates
- Anyone with a health condition
- Anyone with a weakened immune system

3 ways to make an appointment:



Walk in or schedule your vaccine appointment at a nearby CVS Pharmacy®:
[CVS.co/ScheduleFluShot](https://www.cvs.com/flu-shot)



Walk in or schedule a flu shot at a retail clinic, like [MinuteClinic®](#).



Log in to your member website at [Aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com) to find a local network pharmacy or doctor.

You can get your flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends COVID-19 primary series vaccines for everyone ages six months and older, and additional COVID-19 vaccines for everyone ages five years and older, if eligible.

When are you up-to-date with your vaccines?

Guidelines for vaccines may vary based on your age, the type of primary series vaccine you've received and the timing of your last dose.² Be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure if you are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine.

One of the best ways to protect against serious illness and symptoms from the flu and other illnesses this year is to receive all vaccines you are eligible for. Use the link below to schedule both vaccines at a CVS® location near you.

Flu shot appointments are available now:



[CVS.co/ScheduleFluShot](https://www.cvs.co/ScheduleFluShot)

We're proud to recommend CVS Pharmacy® locations for flu shots.



Get your flu shot at CVS, and you'll get \$5 off your next \$20 purchase.³



Aetna®, a CVS Health® company is committed to working closely with your local pharmacy to help you feel your best. Making flu shots easy — it's another way **healthier happens together™**.

¹CDC. Who Needs a Flu Vaccine. October 27, 2021. Available at: [CDC.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinations.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinations.htm). Accessed August 11, 2022.

²CDC. Stay Up to Date with Your COVID-19 Vaccines. July 19, 2022.

Available at: [CDC.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#recommendations). Accessed August 11, 2022.

³FOR \$5 OFF \$20 COUPON: Redeemable in store at CVS Pharmacy® and Longs Drugs® locations only for one-time use only between 8/14/23-12/31/23. Coupon received via email after vaccination. Limit one per customer per eligible vaccine visit. \$5 savings applied to total qualifying purchase of at least \$20 (after other coupons and discounts are applied). Limit one coupon per transaction. Reward cannot be issued in AR, NJ, NY, at Target or Schnucks locations, or at MinuteClinic® locations in AR, MA, NJ, NY, PA and RI. Coupon is void if copied or transferred and where prohibited by law. Internet printed or counterfeit coupons prohibited. Original must be relinquished with purchase. ExtraCare® card required to receive savings. Coupon cannot be combined with any other CVS Pharmacy coupon. Coupon excludes alcohol, lottery, money orders, prescriptions and copays, pseudoephedrine/ephedrine products, postage stamps, prepaid cards, gift cards, newspapers and magazines, milk (where required by law or regulation), sale/promotional merchandise, bottle deposits, bus passes, hunting and fishing licenses and any imposed governmental fees or items reimbursed by a government health plan. Tax charged on precoupon price where required. No cash back. Retailer's coupon. Bearer assumes all sales/use tax liability. CVS reserves the right to modify this offer.

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