Midwest Kidney Network

FLU VACCINE – GIVE IT A SHOT!

Many people say they do not want the flu shot because it makes them sick, or they have heard about other people who feel sick from the shot. The good news?

You cannot get the flu from the flu shot!

The flu shot does not have the live flu virus, only one protein of the flu, so it cannot give you the flu. The nose spray flu vaccine has a weak live virus

It is common to have mild side effects after getting the flu shot. This means that your body is working with the vaccine and building your protection to fight the flu! These side effects are much less severe than the flu itself and typically last for a day or two.

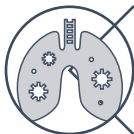## WHY DO PEOPLE FEEL SICK AFTER A FLU SHOT?

Immune Response to the Shot: The mild side effects you feel mean your body's immune system is doing its job!

Chance Illness: You may have gotten sick right before or after getting the shot. It takes about 2 weeks to get full protection after getting the shot.

Mismatch: The flu shot is made different each year, and sometimes the match is not as good as others. It is still good to get the shot - a mismatch shot still gives you some protection so you do not get as sick.
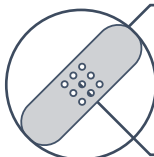
Other sickness: The common cold or COVID-19 have symptoms like the flu. You may be sick with something other than the flu. Ask your health team about other shots you can get to protect your lungs from other sickness.

Read about what other kidney patients like you are saying about vaccinations and why they are important!
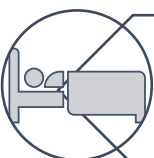
[Kidney Concerns Fall 2025 Newsletter](#)

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

Pain, redness, swelling where you got your shot: This is the most common side effect.

What to do: Keep your arm moving! You may also use warm or cold packs to the area.

Mild flu symptoms - headache, muscle aches, tiredness, low fever: These are normal signs that your body is building protection for the flu

What to do: Rest, talk to your health team about taking pain medicine like Tylenol and how much water you can drink.