

Do You Need a Flu Shot AND the COVID Vaccine?



Flu and COVID-19 are similar enough to cause confusion about vaccines. While flu and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, they're caused by different viruses. And their vaccines use different technologies. That's why health experts urge you to get both vaccines.

If you're thinking flu isn't all that bad, think again. Flu can be severe and even lead to death. It usually comes on suddenly. Signs include fever, chills, a cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headaches and fatigue. Vomiting and diarrhea are more likely in children than adults.

Flu spreads by droplets from coughs, sneezing and even talking, like COVID-19 and its variants. You may infect others before you even know you're sick.

By now, the importance of safe behaviors is well known. About the only COVID safety step not part of flu tips is wearing a mask.

Here are tips to avoid getting or spreading flu:

- **Keep it clean:** Wash your hands often with soap or alcohol-based sanitizer. Disinfect high-traffic areas at home and at work.
- **Keep hands away:** Avoid touching your face. Germs like to hitchhike on fingers that travel from a germ area to your eyes or mouth.
- **Keep your distance:** Flu viruses can spread up to 6 feet.
- **Keep covered:** Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue. No tissue? Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- **Keep your immune system strong:** Get enough sleep, manage stress, eat healthy foods, and stay active.

And get your flu shot. Every year. Viruses mutate, so fight the latest strain with the latest vaccine. Flu vaccines are overwhelmingly safe.

Americans by the hundreds of millions have gotten flu shots for more than 50 years.

Flu vaccines are available for most people 6 months old and older. A flu shot is vital for high-risk groups, including seniors, children and pregnant women. High risk includes people with pre-existing conditions like asthma, heart disease and diabetes.

Health insurance often covers a flu shot at low or no-extra cost from a doctor or pharmacy in their network. Many communities plan events to ensure those eligible have access to a flu vaccine.

CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) track the safety of vaccines approved for use in the United States. It's your best shot at avoiding flu this season.

And don't forget your COVID vaccine if you are not already fully vaccinated. Pfizer and Moderna are two-shot vaccines, and Johnson & Johnson is one shot.

Resources: [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Eating and Living Right Can Reduce the Risk of Breast Cancer

The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates, credited with writing the Hippocratic oath, said, "Food is the first medicine." There's debate about those being his exact words. But there's no debate about the effect of diet and lifestyle on health for the last 2,400 years.

That's proven true today. Especially when it comes to breast health.

Good nutrition may lower the risk of breast cancer – in men as well as women. It's important to eat beans, berries and cruciferous veggies like broccoli. Orange fruits and vegetables like peaches, oranges, carrots and pumpkin have cancer-fighting carotenoids. Other key foods are high in omega 3, like salmon or walnuts.

Focusing on a healthy diet means avoiding some foods. These include fried foods, fast and processed foods, and preserved meats. Keep sugary food like cakes, pastries, cookies and candies to a minimum. It's also good to avoid white bread, white pasta and



white rice. If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than two drinks a day for men and one for women.

A healthy lifestyle includes regular physical activity and 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night. It leaves no room for tobacco products. A healthy lifestyle also means maintaining a healthy weight. If you're not sure what your weight should be, talk to your doctor.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. It's a good time to call your doctor to set up a mammogram. Remember to examine your breasts regularly to watch for changes. Any time you find a painful or suspicious lump, call your doctor.

Resources: [Healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com); [WebMD.com](https://www.webmd.com)

Lemon Chicken Orzo Soup with Kale

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano and/or thyme, divided
- 1 ¼ teaspoon salt, divided
- ¾ ground pepper, divided
- 2 cups chopped onions

- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 cups unsalted chicken broth
- ⅔ cup orzo, preferably whole-wheat
- 4 cups chopped kale
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced

Directions

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon each oregano (and/or thyme), salt and pepper. Cook, stirring

occasionally until lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the chicken to a plate.

Add the remaining oil, onions, carrots and celery to the pan. Cook, scraping any browned bits, until the vegetables are soft and lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Add garlic, bay leaf and the remaining oregano (and/or thyme). Cook, stirring, until fragrant, 30 to 60 seconds.

Add the broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the orzo. Reduce



the heat to maintain a simmer, cover and cook for 5 minutes. Add the kale and chicken, along with any accumulated juices. Continue cooking until the orzo is tender and the chicken is cooked through, 5 to 8 minutes more.

Remove from heat. Discard the bay leaf. Stir in lemon zest, lemon juice and the remaining salt and pepper.

Recipe courtesy of [EatingWell.com](https://www.eatingwell.com). For nutritional information, [click here](#).

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