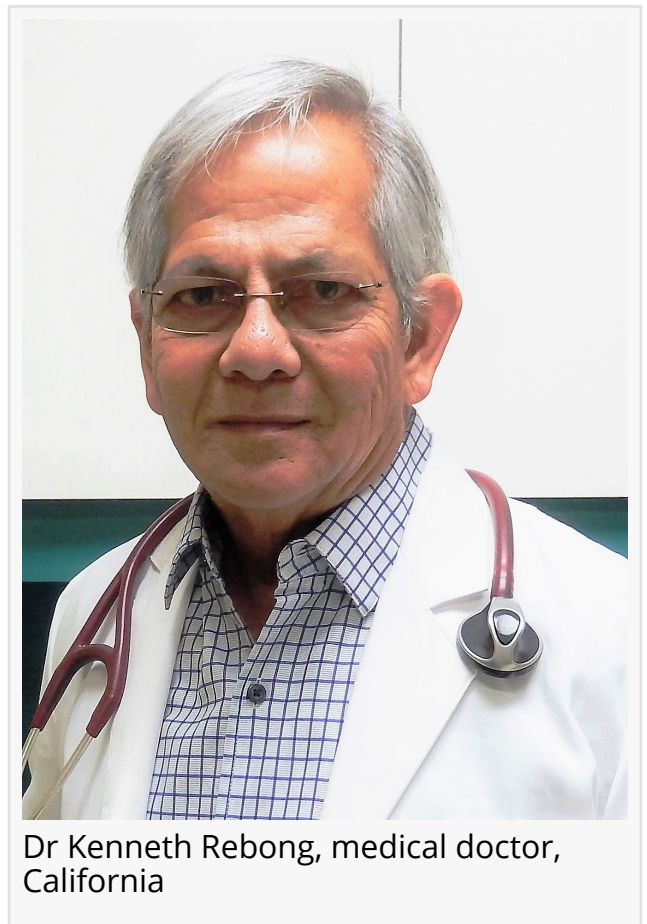


The Flu Shot – a few more good reasons to get one – new article by Pediatrician Dr. Kenneth Rebond

Every year there seems to be the same discussion, whether or not to get a flu shot. Pediatrician Kenneth Rebond, MD, explains in a new published article.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The flu shot discussion starts again every year when flu season starts. It is true that there are many different strains of the influenza virus and the vaccine might not necessarily protect you from getting the flu. However, the big picture is that if many get the flu shot, it will lower the overall rate flu infection. So, consider getting a flu shot not just for you, but for the people around you. Dr. [Kenneth Rebond](#), MD, based in San Jose, California, provides his thoughts on this issue. The complete article is available on the Blog of [Dr. Rebond](#) at <https://drkennethrebong.wordpress.com/>

As usual, with all health issues, any questions or concerns should be discussed with your primary care doctor to make an informed decision. The flu shot is not for everybody, and it should be age appropriate. Your doctor can review your medical history and provide personalized advice. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintain a website with detailed information about the flu shot, and related information. See <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>.



Dr Kenneth Rebond, medical doctor, California

Our society generally tends to underestimate the seriousness of the flu and consider it similarly to the common cold. This is a common misconception.

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While the CDC recommends that anyone older than 6 months get the flu shot, including pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions, there are exceptions”

*Dr. Kenneth P Rebond,
pediatrician*

The Influenza virus is considerably more serious in nature. The CDC estimates that the flu has caused between 140,000 to 710,000 hospitalizations and as many as 12,000 and 56,000 deaths annually in the U.S. since 2010. Annual flu vaccine is the first step towards gaining protection against this disease and the CDC recommends it for everyone who is 6 months of age and older.

Consequences of the Flu

Typically, flu viruses start with infection to your nose, throat and lungs, but it can go on to cause a wide range of

complications. While sinus and ear infections are moderate complications, Pneumonia is a serious flu complication that arises either due to the flu infection itself or if you're simultaneously infected by bacteria as well as the flu virus.

Other more serious complications can include inflammation of the heart, brain or muscle or even multi-organ failure. An extreme inflammatory response can result in sepsis. In the past seven flu seasons, influenza vaccination prevented around 5.3 million illnesses and 85,000 hospitalizations and as per the CDC a mere 5% increase in the number of vaccinations could have further prevented as many as 483,000 influenza illnesses. It would have stopped another two hundred thousand plus influenza-associated medical visits, and around seven thousand influenza-associated hospitalizations across the U.S.A.

Some are more at risk than others

While anyone can get the flu, some people are at higher risk of a more severe form of infection. These include:

- * Children younger than 5 years old, particularly those that are younger than 2 years old
- * People older than 65 years old
- * People suffering from asthma or chronic lung disease
- * People with neurological conditions, heart disease and those suffering from blood, liver, kidney, endocrine and metabolic disorders
- * People whose immune system has recently been compromised due to an illness
- * Pregnant women

Does the flu shot really work?

Because there are different strains of the influenza virus each year, the flu vaccine is modified every year to target the particular strain that is predicted to circulate that year. However, there is no way of knowing which strain it might be.

Thus, the effectiveness of the vaccine somewhat depends on how accurate the predictions are. Despite this, the CDC still strongly recommends that you get the flu vaccine as it still offers some degree of protection even if it's not completely effective in preventing the disease. Because the influenza virus is transmittable, if a fewer number of people get sick, then the virus won't be able



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to penetrate as deeply and spread. Besides CDC, other professional medical groups like the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Foundation of Infectious Diseases and the American Medical Association also recommend an annual flu vaccine.

There are several options for the 2018-2019 flu season, these include:

- * Standard dose flu shots given into the muscle. A needle is used to inject these, but for some people between the ages of 18 and 64 years old, a jet injector can be used.
- * Shots made with adjuvant. These are suitable for older people.
- * Shots made the help of virus previously grown via cell culture technique.
- * Shots made using vaccine production technology. These do not employ the flu virus and follow a different mechanism.
- * The nasal spray vaccine, also known as the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV). This is recommended for use in non-pregnant individuals between the ages of 2 and 49 years. People with underlying medical conditions are advised against using the nasal spray flu vaccine.

What about side effects?

The influenza vaccine is formulated from an inactivated or weakened version of the influenza virus so you might experience flu-like symptoms post vaccination. These will subside however, and you won't suffer from a full bout of the flu. There may also be some redness or swelling at the

injection site, and low-grade fever. The side-effects are not really a concern because it just means that the vaccine is working and will be able to protect you from the actual virus.

The immunity from the previous year's flu shot work will not be sufficient. First, the immune response generated by last year's vaccine has gradually declined. Therefore, you need to be injected with a new one for continued protection. Also, as discussed above, the flu virus is constantly changing in strain. The flu vaccine is also analyzed accordingly and redesigned to combat new forms of the virus each year.

Too busy to get a flu shot?

Flu vaccines are easily available at many different locations such as doctor's offices, clinics, pharmacies and college health centers. Many employers and schools offer them as well. It is



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recommended to get a flu shot before the virus starts spreading in your community as it takes around 2 weeks for your body to build up a sufficient immunity. If you're looking to get one, it is best not to wait around and get one as soon as possible to ensure maximum protection.

Is it right for everybody?

As mentioned earlier, when in doubt, discuss it with your primary care doctor. While the CDC recommends that anyone older than 6 months get the flu shot, including pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions, there are exceptions. You should avoid the flu shot if you're severely allergic to the components in the flu shot. Also, if you have ever had the Guillan-Barré Syndrome (An immune disorder), then consult your doctor before getting a flu shot.

One of the components involved in the manufacturing of flu vaccines are eggs, but as per the CDC, even if you suffer from egg allergies, you can still get the flu shot. In case your allergies are serious and you are concerned side effects from vaccinations, please consult your doctor.

About Dr. Kenneth P. Rebong

Dr. [Kenneth Pomar Rebong](#), MD, a medical doctor in San Jose, California, and specializes in Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine. He completed his Pediatric Residency at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

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