It's almost time for your annual flu shot

The CDC estimates that the flu shot prevents tens of thousands of hospitalizations annually. And if you do get sick with the flu, being vaccinated will likely reduce the severity of your symptoms.

Benefits of getting a flu shot

The flu shot helps reduce your risk of severe flu disease, hospitalization, and death. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), while the impact of the flu varies annually, each year between 2010 and 2020 it has resulted in:

- 9 – 45 million illnesses
- 140,000 – 810,000 hospitalizations
- 12,000 – 61,000 deaths

The most effective prevention against the seasonal flu is to get your annual flu shot which will be widely available in the community from health care providers and retail stores. Kaiser Permanente will be opening seasonal flu clinics throughout the Bay Area starting on September 11, 2023, and recommends getting a no-cost flu shot as soon as they are available.

Do I need a flu shot every year?

Flu viruses change each year, so it's important to get an annual flu shot.

What flu shot should people ages 65 and older get?

The CDC now recommends that people ages 65 and older get "higher dose" or "adjuvanted" flu shots.

When should I get the flu shot? Can I get it at the same time as my COVID-19 vaccination – first dose, second dose or booster?

We recommend getting the flu shot at your first opportunity and preferably by mid-October. An annual COVID-19 vaccination is also recommended and is expected to be available in late October and can be given at the same time as the flu vaccine.

Is the flu shot particularly important for some groups of people?

Yes. It is especially important for people who are at greater risk of flu complications: pregnant women, health care workers, people with compromised immune systems, children ages 6 months to 4 years, adults 50 and over, extremely obese people, people with diabetes, and people with chronic kidney, pulmonary, or cardiovascular diseases.

How can I get the flu shot?

Kaiser Permanente members can get a no-cost flu shot (as soon as they are available) during any doctor visit or at one of our flu shot locations. In early September, flu shot locations and hours can be found at kp.org/flu or by calling 1-800-777-7904.