

**THERE'S
SOMETHING
SPECIAL
ABOUT THE
HEALTH OF**

the
**AFRICAN
AMERICAN
COMMUNITY**

The flu and you: How to stay healthy

Every year, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from complications of influenza (the flu). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people 65 and older account for more than half of these hospitalizations and 90 percent of flu deaths.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STAY HEALTHY?

Getting a flu vaccine can significantly reduce your chances of getting sick this flu season. In fact, the American Lung Association recommends the vaccine for more than 200 million Americans who are at a high risk for serious complications. These individuals include:

- anyone over 50;
- anyone who will be pregnant during flu season;¹
- residents and staff of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;

- anyone 5 to 64 years old with underlying chronic medical conditions, such as asthma, heart failure, COPD, or coronary artery disease;
- all household members and caregivers of people in high-risk groups;
- all children and adolescents 6 months old to 18 years old;
- health care workers;
- anyone with a condition that could impair respiratory function or increase the risk for choking.

Talk with your doctor to find out if the flu vaccine is right for you. The vaccine is generally available from October to March. Besides your doctor's office, flu vaccines are frequently offered at pharmacies, health centers, and many community centers.

Independence Blue Cross members can learn more about the flu, vaccines, and any other health topic by calling a Health Coach at 1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583). Health Coaches are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's just one more way we're here for you every step of the way.



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