

Health Bulletin

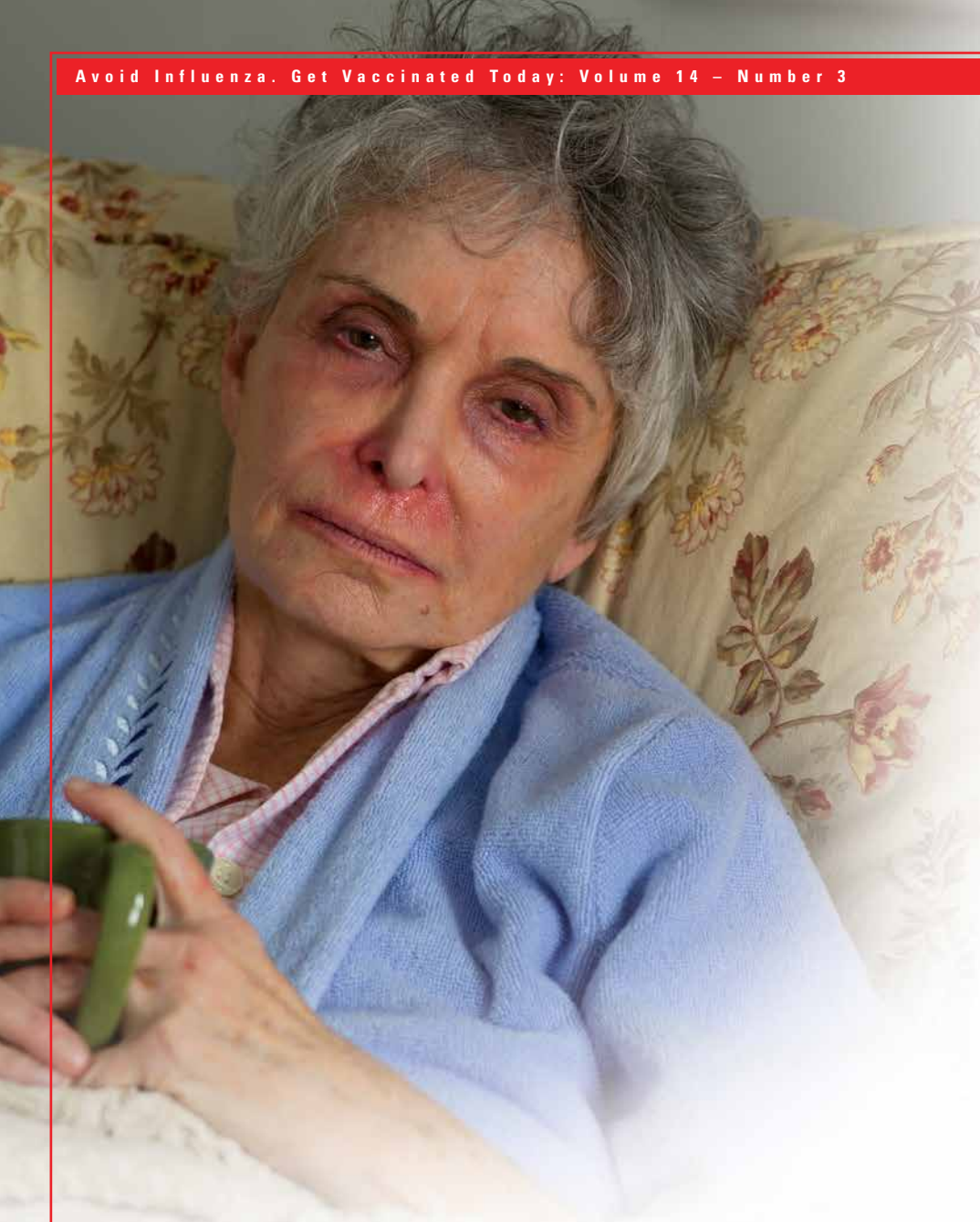
NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#104 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

Avoid influenza.

**GET
VACCINATED
TODAY.**

**Call 311 or text flu to 877877 to find out
where you can get the vaccine.**



Influenza (flu) is a very contagious lung infection.

- It can make you **miserable**, with fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches, causing you to miss work or family time.
- It can lead to **serious health problems**, like pneumonia, ear and sinus infections and dehydration.
- It can **worsen existing health problems**, like congestive heart failure, asthma and diabetes.

Each year, thousands of New Yorkers die after getting influenza. In the 2014-15 flu season, over 140 U.S. children died, and thousands more had to be hospitalized. **Don't put your family at risk.**

Protect your family from influenza.

1. Get the vaccine.

- Everyone aged 6 months and older should get the vaccine.
- Get vaccinated every year. The vaccine is updated every influenza season to protect you against new viruses. The vaccine can be given as a shot or a nasal spray called FluMist®.
- Don't wait until peak influenza season (January to March) to get the vaccine. Get it in late summer or early fall, as soon as it's ready. Still, a late vaccine is much better than no vaccine.

2. Don't spread germs.

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or the inside of your elbow — not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours (without fever reducing medicine).

3. Learn about antiviral drugs.

- If you already have influenza, antivirals can help you get better faster.
- If you are at high risk for influenza complications (see **People at Highest Risk**), getting antivirals early can help stop you from getting seriously sick.
- Antivirals can help if you are already sick, but the flu vaccine is the best way to prevent influenza.

**UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT,
MANY HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS MUST
COVER THE FLU VACCINE AT NO COST TO YOU.
CHECK WITH YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY.**

Deadline for Kids in Child Care

All children 6 months to 5 years of age who attend a New York City-licensed child care or nursery school, Head Start or pre-kindergarten must get one dose of the flu vaccine between July 1 and December 31 every year.



Find a flu vaccine location.

- Ask your family doctor or primary care provider.
- Try your nearest pharmacy — many offer vaccines to adults 18 years and older.
- Check if your workplace offers the vaccine.
- Visit an NYC Health Department immunization clinic or an NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation hospital/clinic. These locations give free or low-cost flu vaccines to all patients and visitors.
- Search locations by neighborhood or zip code. Call 311 or text **flu** to 877877*

* Message and data rates may apply. Text **STOP** to quit, **HELP** for more information. For Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, visit nyc.gov/health.

**CALL
311**

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For a free email subscription, visit nyc.gov/health/email.

Everyone aged 6 months and up should get the flu vaccine each year.

People at Highest Risk

- **Adults over 65**
- **Pregnant women**
- **Children younger than 5 years (especially those under 2)**
- **People with certain health conditions, including:**
 - Diabetes
 - Lung or heart disease
 - Asthma
 - Sickle cell anemia
 - Kidney or liver disease
 - Metabolic disorders
 - Weakened immune system (such as from HIV or cancer treatment)
 - Disorders that may cause breathing problems, such as seizure, nerve and muscle disorders
- **People who are extremely overweight**
- **Children and teens (age 6 months to 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy**
- **People living in nursing homes or other care facilities**
- **American Indians and Alaskan Natives**

Those in close contact with people at risk of complications, like health care workers and people who care for infants too young to be vaccinated, also need the vaccine.



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**For Non-Emergency NYC Services
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages**