

# Seniors and Flu Shots

Influenza can make you seriously sick for many days and lowers your body's ability to fight off other infections.

## Key Facts

### The Flu Shot:

- Cannot make you sick (unlike flu vaccines developed in the past)
- Reduces your chance of getting the flu
- Protects people with chronic conditions who are more vulnerable to the flu
- Protects caregivers and their loved ones

Watch for dates and places for Flu Clinics in your area  
or call Health Links - Info Santé:

**788-8200** (in Winnipeg)    **1-888-315-9257** (outside Winnipeg)

**Flu shots protect you and others, too.**  
**REMEMBER: GET THE SHOT, NOT THE FLU!**

Here's what an Aging in Manitoba Study heard from seniors:

## The Good News

- 80 per cent of those interviewed had a flu shot the year before
- Their **REASONS FOR GETTING** a flu shot:
  - “I thought it was a good idea.”
  - “My doctor recommended it.”
  - “I got the flu very easily before getting the shot... now I never do.”

## The Bad News

- 20 per cent of older Manitobans did not have a flu shot the year before
- Their **REASONS FOR NOT GETTING** a flu shot:
  - “I don't need it - I never get sick.”
  - “I don't believe they work.”
  - “I got sick from a previous shot.”

An estimated 4,000 to 8,000 Canadians  
– **mostly seniors** –  
die each year from complications related to the flu.

## How do you know if you have the **flu** or a common **cold**?

Symptom	Common Cold	Flu (Influenza)
Fever	Rare	Usual, high, sudden onset, lasts 3–4 days
Headache	Rare	Usual, can be severe
General aches and pains	Sometimes, mild	Usual, often severe
Fatigue and weakness	Sometimes, mild	Usual, severe, may last 2–3 weeks or more
Extreme fatigue	Unusual	Usual, early onset, can be severe
Runny, stuffy nose	Common	Common
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Common
Chest discomfort, coughing	Sometimes, mild to moderate	Usual, can become severe
Complications	Can lead to sinus congestion or earache	Can lead to pneumonia and respiratory failure, worsen a current chronic condition or be life threatening

**To prevent a cold:** Wash your hands frequently

**To prevent the flu:** Wash your hands frequently and

**GET AN ANNUAL FLU SHOT**

### Sources:

Aging In Manitoba (AIM) Study, University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority  
Manitoba Health  
Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion

[www.aginginmanitoba.ca](http://www.aginginmanitoba.ca)  
[www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/a-z/influenza](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/a-z/influenza)  
[www.gov.mb.ca/health/flu](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/flu)  
[www.immunize.cpha.ca](http://www.immunize.cpha.ca)