

FLU VACCINE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

As of September 27, 2023

1. Is the flu vaccine mandatory for students?

The flu shot vaccine is required for all The Claremont Colleges (TCC) undergraduate students.

2. What is the deadline for obtaining a flu vaccine?

The deadline for undergraduate students to obtain their vaccine is Tues., Oct. 31.

3. Where can I get my flu shot?

Flu shot clinics will be offered throughout the fall on campus. SHS will provide six clinics, one on each undergraduate campus. Flu shots can also be obtained by scheduling a nurse appointment at SHS by calling 909-621-8222 (x18222) or through online scheduling at "My Health Portal" (link on the [SHS website](#)).

Flu Shot Clinics			
<i>Undergraduate students may attend any location regardless of enrolled school</i>			
Campus	Date	Time	Location
Pitzer	Tuesday, October 10	12 – 4 p.m.	Gold Student Health & Wellness Center, Multi-Purpose Room.
Claremont McKenna	Wednesday, October 11	2 – 6 p.m.	McKenna Auditorium
Scripps	Thursday, October 12	12 – 4 p.m.	Balch Auditorium
Pomona	Wednesday, October 18	1 – 5 p.m.	Edmunds Ballroom
All	Thursday, October 19	2 – 6 p.m.	Tranquada – 1st Floor MCAPS Annex (previously HEO)
HMC	Friday, October 20	1 – 5 p.m.	Green Room Platt Campus Center

4. How much is the flu vaccine?

All undergraduate students have insurance coverage with the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) or by waiving out with an equivalent private insurance plan. At SHS, the flu shot is \$35 and is covered by most insurance plans with a \$0 copay, although provider networks may vary; those enrolled in Kaiser may also receive the flu shot at no cost from a Kaiser clinic. SHS is partnering with our local pharmacy for our Campus Flu Vaccine Clinics in October. Flu vaccines are billed directly to insurance at the Flu Clinics. Flu shots received at SHS are eligible for a \$10 subsidy for those with private insurance or uninsured. SHS bills SHIP directly for influenza vaccines and is covered 100%.

5. Why are yearly flu vaccines necessary? Can you briefly explain some of the science of the vaccine?

Influenza is a contagious respiratory disease that can lead to serious illness, hospitalization, or even death. The best way to protect yourself and others is to get a yearly flu vaccine. The flu is changing constantly, and annual vaccines are adjusted to protect against the more common virus for the upcoming flu season. In addition, your protection from a previous year's vaccine will decline. For these reasons, it is recommended that you repeat the vaccine yearly at the beginning of flu season. The vaccine helps reduce the severity of influenza illness if you get sick and helps reduce transmission of influenza in the community.

6. Why is the flu vaccine so important for college students?

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It is important to note that TCC undergraduate students reside in a congregate living setting (dormitories), making it paramount to have mass immunity to decrease the likelihood of an outbreak, which could jeopardize the health of many individuals, not to mention the disruption to their academic success. Stress, lack of sleep, and being around many people in a residential dorm setting can result in more frequent illnesses like the flu. Obtaining a flu shot can help prevent illness from the flu by providing greater immunity. Flu vaccination is recommended by the CDC for all those six months of age and older unless there is a medical contraindication to receiving it. Like COVID-19 vaccination, flu vaccination reduces the likelihood of an individual getting sick from the influenza virus. It decreases the possibility of hospitalization and severe complications if one still gets infected, reducing the burden on the overall healthcare system.

7. Are you able to receive an exemption for the vaccine? If so, how?

Students may request a religious or medical exemption. Students must complete the "Affidavit for Exemption to Vaccination" on the SHS website—the student's respective college processes religious exemptions. SHS is responsible for medical exemptions and primarily follows the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance.

8. Can you contextualize the anti-vaccine movement and shed light on any prominent myths?

As with many things in medicine and health, individuals can have personal and nuanced concerns. SHS is here to provide care to all students and assist students in navigating their own health choices. Please reach out with any questions. We are here to help.

9. Can the flu shot give you the flu?

Most flu shots offered are inactive vaccines – meaning they do not contain any flu virus and can't give you the flu. All vaccines stimulate an immune reaction that can mimic some individuals' early symptoms of an illness. If you have influenza shortly after receiving a flu shot, you were likely exposed to the flu before you received the vaccine.

While it makes up a small number of the flu vaccines annually, the nasal spray flu vaccine is made with a weak live virus. The vaccine only contains one protein of the virus - enough for your immune system to defend against the virus but doesn't have the other virus machinery to get you sick.

10. Is it true that young, healthy people do not need flu shots?

Healthy folks can still spread the influenza virus to those more likely to have severe illness, including newborns, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems. It's essential for those who can receive the flu shot to get it and help reduce the spread during peak season.

11. Is it true that you can't get a flu shot with an egg allergy?

We've known for a while that severe allergic reactions to the flu are rare. For the 2023-2024 flu season, the [CDC confirms](#) that no additional precautions are needed for individuals with an egg allergy.