



Boost Your Flu IQ: Myths and Truth

(NAPSA)—According to the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, more than 43 percent of Americans said they weren't going to get vaccinated for the flu.

To help you stay on the safe side of such statistics, Target's chief medical director and father of three, Dr. Joshua Riff, tackles five flu myths.

Myth: The flu shot can give you the flu.

Truth: A flu shot contains dead or inactive viruses needed to prime your body to fight an infection but these viruses are not contagious. Some people may experience side effects or coincidentally catch a cold after being vaccinated but you cannot get influenza from the flu shot.

Myth: Only the young or the elderly need to get vaccinated for the flu.

Truth: Everyone can benefit from the flu vaccine. Those in high-risk categories are more susceptible to serious consequences from the flu but everyone plays a role in protecting the community by getting vaccinated.

Myth: You must be vaccinated before November for the flu shot to be effective.

Truth: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting the flu shot as soon as it's available. While it's best to get vaccinated early, it's never too late.

Myth: I don't need the vaccine because I've already had the flu.

Truth: Each year, there are at least two strains of influenza that circulate. You can be infected with one type and subsequently get the other. In other cases, you might think you had influenza but you really just had a cold.

Myth: Eating oranges will protect me from the flu.



Getting vaccinated is key to preventing the flu for yourself and those around you.

Truth: Many studies have evaluated the role vitamin C has on the immune system. Most concluded that taking vitamin C does not decrease your risk of getting sick. The bottom line: Vitamin C can't hurt but getting vaccinated is key to preventing the flu.

If you think the flu is something to sneeze at, think again. The CDC reports that 36,000 people die annually from the flu and it causes more than 200,000 hospitalizations. Fortunately, it can be easy to protect yourself. You can get vaccinated at any Target Pharmacy, no appointment necessary. You may also want to consider the doctor's top 10 flu-fighting tips:

Dr. Riff's Top 10 Flu Essentials

1. A flu shot
2. Hand sanitizer
3. Up & Up multivitamins and supplements
4. Anti-viral tissues
5. Lysol anti-bacterial spray
6. A new toothbrush
7. Pain reliever and fever reducer
8. A good pillow
9. Vicks VapoRub
10. Decongestants and throat lozenges.