

## **A FLU SHOT KEEPS SENIORS HEALTHY**

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It's a fact – people are living longer, healthier lives. However, seniors have to take greater care of themselves in their advancing years. That's why all Ontarians, especially seniors, are encouraged to get a free flu shot.

Every winter, an average of 75,000 people are hospitalized with the flu in this country. Up to approximately 5,000 Canadians, most of them seniors, die from flu-related pneumonia or other flu-related complications. In the elderly, the flu shot prevents complications such as pneumonia in about six out of every 10 people, and can prevent death in more than eight out of every 10.

If you are 65 or older, you are considered to be in the high-risk category for complications from the flu.

Typical symptoms arising from the flu may include fever, usually between 37 and 40 degrees Celsius in adults although many seniors may not have a fever at all. Respiratory symptoms, such as a cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, as well as a headache, chills, muscle aches and often, extreme weakness and fatigue may result. Confusion and an inability to think clearly with or without fever are also common. If you get the flu, there are steps to take to avoid spreading the virus, including covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and washing your hands often and thoroughly.

The best protection against the flu is the flu shot. Talk to your entire family to make sure they get the flu shot too. Your family members getting vaccinated will also protect you.