



MYTHS

Myth: I don't have to get the flu vaccine every year.

Fact: Flu viruses change constantly. The flu vaccine is updated annually to protect against the viruses that are expected to be most common during each flu season⁹

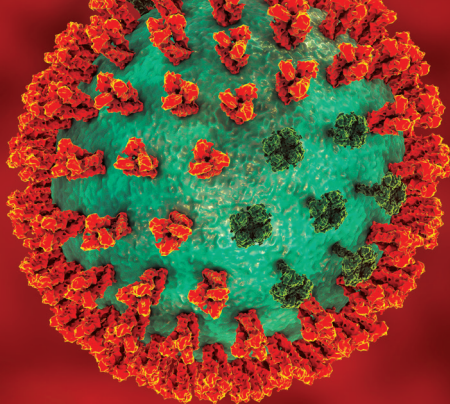
Flu vaccines only work in our bodies for a certain amount of time. For both these reasons you must be vaccinated every year.^{9,10}

Myth: I got the flu vaccine and still got sick so it does not work.

Fact: The vaccine contains inactive viruses so it cannot make you sick. Sometimes you might get other viruses that are circulating that could be mistaken for flu.⁸

Myth: I am pregnant, so it is not safe for me to get the flu vaccine.

Fact: Pregnant women are at high risk for developing complicated flu. The flu vaccine can be used at any stage of pregnancy and protects the baby against flu infection for several months after it is born.^{2,8}



THE FLU VACCINE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR COMMUNITY AGAINST FLU!^{2,3}

ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT THE FLU VACCINE.

References:

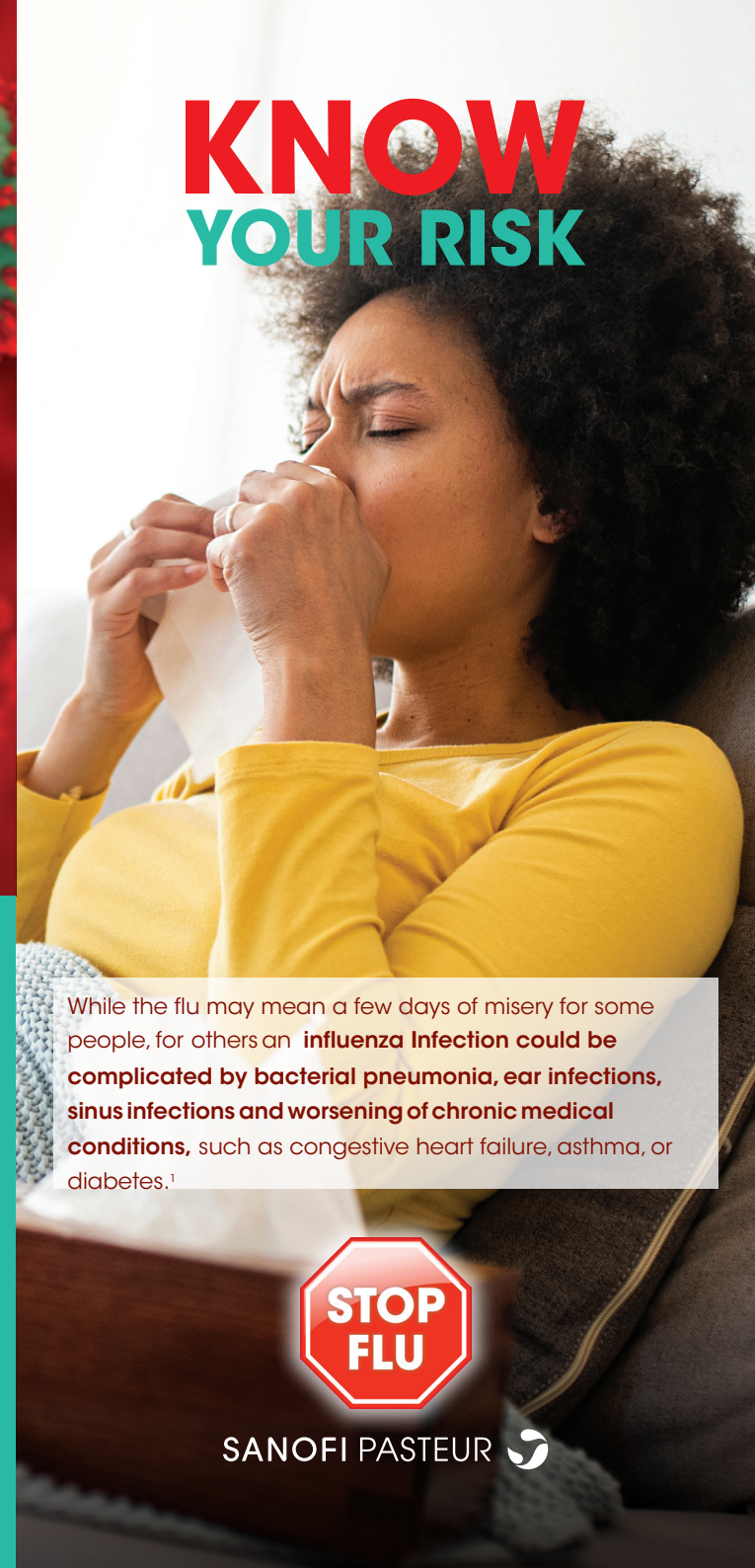
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KNOW YOUR RISK



While the flu may mean a few days of misery for some people, for others an **influenza infection could be complicated by bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections and worsening of chronic medical conditions**, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.¹



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DID YOU **KNOW?**



The **elderly** (>65 years) and young children (particularly <2 years of age) are at high risk for severe flu.²



If you have a **chronic illness** (e.g. Cardiac disease/Diabetes/HIV/TB) or a **weak immune system**, you are at high risk for complications from flu.²



The flu can trigger **cardiovascular complications** and causes the deaths of over **11 000** people in South Africa every year^{2,3}



Changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs during pregnancy make **pregnant woman more prone to severe illness from flu**, including illness resulting in **hospitalisation**.⁴



With the COVID-19 pandemic placing **pressure on our healthcare systems**, it is more important than ever to **get vaccinated**.⁵



WHY SHOULD YOU GET **VACCINATED FOR FLU?**

Flu is more severe than we may think. Each year it causes:



DEATH

Over 11,000 deaths in South Africa²



SEVERE ILLNESS

Over 47,000 South Africans get seriously sick²



HOSPITALISATION

Almost 50% of South Africans who get seriously sick from flu, need to be admitted to hospital²

DO I STILL NEED A **FLU VACCINE** IF I'VE HAD THE **COVID-19 VACCINE?**

Yes! The flu vaccine protects against infection from influenza viruses, while COVID-19 vaccines protect against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.⁶

Vaccinate against flu to: ⁷

- Reduce illness from flu
- Reduce the need to visit the doctor
- Reduce the severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get sick
- Reduce the risk of flu-associated hospitalization
- Reduce the risk of hospitalisation in pregnant women
- Protect people around you who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain chronic health conditions.

As per current guidelines, the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine should be given at least 14 days apart, in no particular order.*

Guidelines are subject to change, please check with your healthcare provider



* As at January 2022