

How effective is the vaccine?

04:37

People have asked is the vaccine totally effective? Because they have heard that in fact, the vaccine is not totally effective. And that's true, depending on the season depending on the patient population. The effectiveness of the vaccine is anywhere between 40 and 70%. However, those who get the vaccine and still get influenza usually have a much less severe disease. Also, if only half the population gets the vaccine, and even if it's only 70% effective, that will still save thousands of lives and prevent many more hospitalizations.

What else is important to know about the flu shot?

05:25

Recognizing the importance of getting an influenza vaccine, there are more places now than ever to get the vaccine. And you can go online and find lots of different places where influenza vaccine is available. And wherever you go, it will be safe, people will be wearing masks, everyone will be six feet apart. So we don't want anyone to worry about not getting the vaccine because of circulating COVID-19. The other really important thing is we want everybody or almost everybody to get the influenza vaccine. CDC recommends everybody over the age of six, get the influenza vaccine. If we follow that recommendation, there'll be so many less days of work lost, and so many less students missing school. But really the most important thing of all is we want to give the vaccine to those who if they get influenza are likely to die from it. So that's really going to be our major target. Those who would get seriously ill or die from influenza if they got it. So we want to vaccinate everyone over the age of 65. They are high risk anybody with chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, certain inflammatory and immunosuppressive disease. This is the message we want about getting an influenza vaccine really has to go out to those individuals and that's really how we're going to save lives.