

# Top excuses for not getting a flu shot (and why you should)

Seasonal flu is caused by a virus that can fly through the air, hitch a ride on a handshake, hug or kiss, and is extremely good at infecting people and making them sick.

It can spread by person-to-person contact or it can land on a surface, such as a doorknob, handrail, or elevator button, only to be picked up by the next unsuspecting person to come along. Maybe even you.

The best way to avoid the flu this year is to get the widely available flu vaccination from your family doctor, pharmacy, or one of the many flu vaccine clinics sponsored by local health departments, says Dr. Katharine Garnier, a family physician at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey–School of Osteopathic Medicine.

Still, some people routinely avoid this annual shot. For those who are looking for a reason not to get inoculated, Dr. Garnier (humorously) gives her top 10 unwise reasons not to get a flu shot this year:

1. I'm feeling incredibly lucky this year.
2. The vaccine is inexpensive so it probably doesn't work.
3. I'm not afraid of body aches ... or headaches ... or sore throats ... or dangerously high fevers ... and I never get sick!
4. I like the idea of having a real reason to call in sick for work.
5. That cute little paper mask over my nose and mouth is a trendy fashion statement.
6. Getting really, really sick is a great way to lose a few pounds without dieting.
7. I'm not planning to leave my house, or let anyone in, for the next six months anyway.
8. I'm anxious to find out if my insurance company really will cover a hospital stay.
9. I went to the county fair and didn't get swine flu, so I must have a natural immunity.
10. Getting sick with the flu will give me a reason to visit relatives I don't really like so that I can share the virus with them!

Protect yourself and others.  
Get a flu shot.

