

Insist on the Facts! Debunking Common Flu Myths

Actor and father James Van Der Beek has teamed up with MedImmune Specialty Care division of AstraZeneca and FluMist[®] Quadrivalent to create a short educational [video](#) to educate families across the nation about the importance of seasonal flu vaccination. In the video, James debunks the following five flu myths and insists that families spread the facts, not the flu this season!

Top Five Flu Myths and Facts

1. MYTH: *The flu is not a serious disease and is the same as a cold.*

FACT: *The flu is not just a bad cold!* The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and in some cases, can lead to significant complications including hospitalization.¹ The flu and the common cold have similar symptoms, so it can be difficult to tell the difference.² In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and its symptoms are more intense.² Colds generally do not result in serious health problems or hospitalizations.²

2. MYTH: *The flu vaccine is only for the elderly – not for people who are healthy and young.*

FACT: *The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that vaccination is the first and most important step to help individuals prevent the flu.*¹ The flu can cause significant complications for anyone – even healthy, young adults and children can get sick from the flu and spread it to others.³ In fact, more young children go to the hospital because of flu complications than any other vaccine-preventable disease.⁴ Data show that children 2 to 5 years old who received Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) were two times less likely to get the flu versus those who received the flu shot.^{5,6,7} In this population, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that LAIV should be used when immediately available to help protect against the flu.^{5,6,8}

3. MYTH: *There is only one form of the flu vaccine.*

FACT: *The flu vaccine is available in several different options.* There are two main types of flu vaccines: the flu shot and the nasal spray, called FluMist Quadrivalent.¹ FluMist Quadrivalent is the only nasal-spray flu vaccine that helps protect against the four influenza strains contained in the vaccine.⁹ Quadrivalent flu vaccines, available as the shot and the nasal spray, help protect against an additional flu strain that may be in circulation. Trivalent flu vaccines, only available as a shot, help provide protection against three flu strains.¹⁰

4. MYTH: *The flu vaccine can make you sick or give you the flu.*

FACT: *This is simply not true!* Neither FluMist Quadrivalent nor the flu shot can give you the flu or make you sick.¹¹ Influenza vaccines are comprised of either live, weakened viruses (FluMist Quadrivalent) or killed viruses (the traditional shot) – neither of these options can cause the flu.¹¹

5. MYTH: *I don't need to get a flu vaccine every year.*

FACT: *You need a flu vaccine each and every year.* The CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine for two main reasons. First, flu viruses are constantly evolving, so the flu vaccine formulation is updated to keep up with changing flu viruses.³ Secondly, a person's immune protection from vaccination declines over time, so an annual vaccination is needed for optimal protection against the flu.³

More Information to Help Protect Friends and Family

- Talk to your healthcare provider about which flu vaccine may be best for you and your family, and encourage your friends to do the same.
- To learn more about FluMist Quadrivalent, visit www.InsistOnTheMist.com.
- FluMist Quadrivalent is for eligible children and adults ages 2 to 49. The most common side effects are runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, and fever over 100°F.⁶ Please see Important Safety Information on the next page.

Important Safety and Eligibility Information

What is FluMist® Quadrivalent (Influenza Vaccine Live, Intranasal)?

FluMist Quadrivalent is a vaccine that is sprayed into the nose to help protect against influenza. It can be used in children, adolescents, and adults ages 2 through 49. FluMist Quadrivalent is similar to MedImmune's trivalent Influenza Vaccine Live, Intranasal (FluMist), except FluMist Quadrivalent provides protection against an additional influenza strain. FluMist Quadrivalent may not prevent influenza in everyone who gets vaccinated.

Who should not get FluMist Quadrivalent?

You should not get FluMist Quadrivalent if you have a severe allergy to eggs; have ever had a life-threatening reaction to influenza vaccinations; or are 2 through 17 years old and take aspirin or medicines containing aspirin – children or adolescents should not be given aspirin for 4 weeks after getting FluMist Quadrivalent unless your healthcare provider tells you otherwise.

Children under 2 years old have an increased risk of wheezing (difficulty with breathing) after getting FluMist Quadrivalent.

Who may not be able to get FluMist Quadrivalent?

Tell your healthcare provider if you or your child are currently wheezing; have a history of wheezing if under 5 years old; have had Guillain-Barré syndrome; have a weakened immune system or live with someone who has a severely weakened immune system; have problems with your heart, kidneys, or lungs; have diabetes; are pregnant or nursing; or are taking Tamiflu®, Relenza®, amantadine, or rimantadine.

Your healthcare provider will decide if FluMist Quadrivalent is right for you or your child.

What are the most common side effects of FluMist Quadrivalent?

The most common side effects are runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, and fever over 100°F.

Please see accompanying complete [Product Information, including Patient Information](#).

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References

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11. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Misconceptions about Seasonal Flu and Flu Vaccines: Questions & Answers. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/misconceptions.htm>. Accessed May 30, 2014.