**Similarities and Differences between Flu and COVID-19**

Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis. Flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, but there are some key differences between the two.

### Signs and Symptoms

#### Similarities:
- Fever or feeling feverish
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea

#### Differences:
- **Flu** viruses can cause mild to severe illness, including common signs listed.
- **COVID-19** seems to cause more serious illnesses in some people. Other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, different from flu, may include change in or loss of taste or smell.

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**Take time to get a Flu vaccine**

CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. Getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 will be more important than ever.

Flu vaccines will not prevent COVID-19, but they will reduce the burden of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths on the health care system and conserve scarce medical resources for the care of people with COVID-19.

CDC estimates that last season, fewer than half of Americans got a flu vaccine and at least 410,000 people were hospitalized from flu. Increased vaccination coverage would reduce that burden.

Most flu vaccines protect against the four flu viruses that research suggests will be most common.

Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.

Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for people at higher risk to keep from spreading flu to them. This is especially true for people who work in long-term care facilities, which are home to many of the people most vulnerable to flu and COVID-19.