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It may still officially be summer, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wants people to start preparing for the 2018-2019 flu season. The CDC recently released its annual flu vaccine guidelines, stressing that vaccination should occur before influenza activity begins in the community. One of the big changes to the updated guidelines is that they include a nasal spray version of the vaccine as an option for people for whom it is appropriate. Over the past two flu seasons, the CDC has recommended that fluMist nasal spray not be used, over concerns about its effectiveness. Since it takes about two weeks after getting vaccinated for your body to start developing antibodies that protect you from the flu virus, you should try to get your shot by the end of October. Early vaccination is especially important for children between the ages of 6 months and 8 years, who require two doses reduced by at least four weeks from each other during the first season of vaccination. The previous flu season was the heaviest in 15 yearsThe 2017-2018 flu season turned out to be particularly bad, after early signs that it could be one of the worst in recent years, according to Bettina Fries, MD, professor of infectious diseases at Stony Brook University Hospital in New York. Influenza season usually starts in the southern hemisphere, says Dr. Fries. Last year, before the flu season began in the US, we knew there were four times as many cases in Australia as the previous year. According to a report published on September 3, 2018 by the World Health Organization, influenza activity remained at a low seasonal level in Australia and New York as of August 19, 2018. The CDC has applied this methodology to measure the severity of flu seasons, and this refers to the 2003-2004 season. Last season was the first of 15 analyzed to be classified as high severity in all age groups. Changes to the CDC Flu Guidelines There have been several key changes for the upcoming flu season, according to new CDC guidelines: Influenza vaccines have been updated to better combat circulating viruses. Depending on the vaccine, they will protect against three (known as trivalent vaccine) or four (known as quadrivalent vaccine) viruses are expected to be most common. The fluMist nasal spray vaccine is the recommended option this season for use in non-pre-hosts between the ages of 2 and 49. There is a measure against the use of FluMist for people with certain comorbidities, such as children between the ages of 2 and 4 who have asthma, and people with weakened immunity (e.g. HIV-infected). But the American Academy of Pediatrics, which has just released its own flu flu guidelines, recommends a shot over nasal spray in children. Individuals with a history of egg allergy of any severity can obtain any license recommended, and age-appropriate flu vaccines, including the nasal spray option. Protect yourself and others from the flu This season the CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine as the best protection against the flu. While vaccines are not reliable, they reduce the risk of infection and the severity of the disease if someone get the flu. The effectiveness of the flu vaccine varies somewhere between 30 and 50 percent on average, says Fries. Last year, the overall effectiveness of the vaccine was estimated at 40 percent, according to the CDC, meaning it reduced a person's overall risk of having to seek medical attention for the flu by 40 percent. There is irrefutable evidence, even from last year, that the more people we vaccinate, the more we reduce the spread of influenza across our community, says Fries.According to a study published in April 2017 in the journal Pediatrics, vaccination reduced the risk of flu-related deaths by half in children with underlying high-risk diseases, and by nearly two-thirds (65 percent) in healthy children. With a public health perspective, vaccination is not only about protecting the person, but preventing the spread of the virus to others, including children, the elderly and people with weakened immune symptoms. People who are most vulnerable to getting a bad case of flu tend not to make an immune response, says Fries. They rely on everyone else to get vaccinated to keep the viral burden down in society. The flu flight quarantine in NewsThe flu is already making headlines, well before the start of the season gets underway. On Wednesday, September 5, 2018, an Emirates flight from Dubai to New York was quarantined after landing after about 100 passengers and crew became ill with flu-like symptoms. Passengers were checked by CDC officials and 11 people were hospitalized. In this section: Buying and Using Medicine Safe Get Smart About Antibiotics Using Antibiotics Only for Infections Caused by Bacteria Recognize More Antibiotics are drugs that fight infections caused by bacteria not viruses. Antibiotics are not effective against viral infections like colds, most sore throats, and flu. Taking antibiotics for viral infections won't. Cure infections Keep other people from catching will help you feel better Make you get back to work faster Using antibiotics for viruses can put you at risk of getting a bacterial infection that is resistant to antibiotic treatment. Today, almost all important bacterial infections in the United States and the world is becoming resistant to antibiotics. Antibiotic resistance has been named one of the most pressing public health problems in the world. World. are powerful drugs, but they are not a cure for everything that works for you. Smart use of antibiotics is the key to combating the spread of resistance. Related Resources Back to the Beginning author Brian Crans - Updated September 17, 2018B grocery storeIn the doctor's office In PinterestRepeated, the misuse of antibiotics - in humans and animal-discs of drug resistance among bacteria and has made some forms of bacteria virtually indestructible for modern medicine. These microscopic superbugs sicken up to 2 million Americans a year and kill at least 23,000, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.While some businesses, political representatives and members of the medical community are taking preventive and proactive measures to stop these dangerous and costly infections, patients and consumers can take antibiotic control into their own hands by making informed decisions at the grocery store - at home, and in the doctor's office. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reports that 80 percent of all antibiotics sold in the U.S. are given to pets to promote growth and disease prevention. Antibiotics are the only drugs that affect the health of another by one form of life, and the more they are used, the less effective they become. Regular intake of antibiotics in low doses, such as how they are given to livestock and poultry in feed and water, gives bacteria sufficient experience to develop around them. These bacteria survive in animals and are still present when their meat gets into stores. About 48 million people get food poisoning each year, and some bacteria found on raw meat can be deadly. Last year, the FDA announced drug-resistant bacterial contamination in 81 percent ground turkey, 69 percent pork chops, 55 percent ground beef, and 39 percent chicken samples in grocery stores. Every time you shop for meat in your grocery store area, you can make a decision that can interrupt this process: You can help protect yourself by choosing antibiotic-free meats that are available in more grocery stores and restaurants than ever before. Chains such as Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Kroger, Costco and Safeway offer meat without antibiotics. If you can't find them in your neighborhood store, ask the grocer to consider holding these items. Avoid meat from factory farms that rely on antibiotics to delight in cramped, unsanitary conditions - a practice that can lead to antibiotic resistance. For example, Foster Farms chickens raised thus carried multi-drug-resistant salmonella, which sickened 574 people in Year. But buyer beware: Just as the term is all natural, many antibiotic-related statements on packaging can be misleading or uncertain by the USDA (USDA). Food safety at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and The service lists without adding antibiotics as an acceptable term for meat and poultry labels. The term can be used on labels for meat or poultry products if the Agency has sufficient documentation to prove that the animals were raised without antibiotics. Concerned about antibiotic labeling, the Consumers Union-Consumer Reports' advocacy arm sent a letter to Tom Vilsack, the head of the USDA, asking him to clarify some of the claims found on food packaging, such as Antibiotic Free and No Antibiotic Residue. Vilsack replied that being raised without antibiotics meant that antibiotics were not used in the animal's feed or water, or through injections, during their lifetime. Washing your hands often during cooking and always after processing raw meat to avoid cross-contamination between raw meat and other foods can also help reduce the risk of getting sick. Use antibacterial drugs sparingly and only if necessary. Regular soap is a natural antibiotic, and experts say that proper hand washing is enough to keep people safe. Indeed, simple soap and water works very well for almost everything. Using it constantly is good. Dr. Michael Bell, deputy director of the CDC's Division of Health Care Excellence, said, For the usual day-to-day use, in my house I use good soap that smells of flowers. Ok. You don't need anything special. Bell recommends using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when traveling through the airport to prevent the spread of the disease. Antibacterial soap, he said, is useful for cleansing the body before surgery. According to the CDC, studies have shown that there is no additional health benefit using antibacterial soaps in everyday situations. And laboratory studies have linked antibacterial chemicals in cleaning products to bacterial resistance. The FDA proposed a rule in December that would require antibacterial soap manufacturers to prove the safety of their products in order to keep them on the market as labeled. Because of the widespread exposure of consumers to ingredients in antibacterial soaps, we believe that the benefits of using antibacterial soaps should be clearly demonstrated to balance any potential risk. Dr. Janet Woodcock, director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, said in a statement. Other factors of drug resistance in bacteria are misuse and overuse of antibiotics in humans. One study found that 36 percent of Americans mistakenly believe antibiotics a treatment for viral infections. Requesting antibiotics from your doctor to treat a viral infection, especially a common cold, flu or acute bronchitis, will not do your symptoms any good. The most common infections are best treated by over-the-counter foods and enough rest. Or as Anna Julien, an emergency room doctor, tells her patients: Your body will naturally take care of it if you take care of yourself: sleep more, get more fluid, take a day or two off work to recover, and stop running around stressing yourself for the little things. Many problems associated with the use of antibiotics can be prevented if the patient acts as his best advocate, Bell said. Experts suggest the following suggestions: Don't require antibiotics if your doctor says they're not needed. If your doctor prescribes antibiotics, ask if he or she is sure that the infection is bacterial. When taking all antibiotics as prescribed, and always complete a full course of treatment. Do not give antibiotics to someone else, and do not when taking antibiotics that have been prescribed to another person. Make sure your doctor washes his hands thoroughly before performing the procedure, such as inserting a catheter, and ask each day whether the catheter should come out. Ask your medical team members what they are doing to help prevent antibiotic resistance and whether their facility has an antibiotic management program. If you can, choose a hospital with an antibiotic management program. Take someone with you to a doctor's appointment. Go with your loved one, Bell said. Take turns being the bad guy. Brian Crans is an award-winning investigative reporter and former senior writer at Healthline.com. He was part of a two-man team that launched Healthline News in January 2013. Since then, his work has been featured on Yahoo! News, Huffington Post, Fox News and other outlets. Prior to joining Healthline, Brian was a staff writer for The Rock Island Argus and The Dispatch, where he covered crime, government, politics, and other strikes. His journalistic experience took him to Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast and to the U.S. Capitol while Congress was in session. He is a graduate of Winon State University, who named the journalism award in his honor. In addition to reporting, Brian is the author of three novels. He is currently touring the country to promote his latest book, Assault Rifles and Paedophiles: American Love Story. When he's not traveling, he lives in Oakland, California. He has a dog named Friday. Friday.

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