Help fight the flu!

Not all heroes wear capes - you too, can be a hero by getting your flu shot to help fight the flu this season! Influenza is a contagious airborne disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing, and just general close contact with others. It is most predominant in the US population from October until May. It is caused by the influenza viruses, and it strikes suddenly and can last several days.

The virus can be spread 24 hours before the onset of symptoms and up to 5 days after symptoms are present. It is important to wash your hands, and to wipe down surfaces that you touch often, such as door knobs, your desk, and your phone!

Influenza symptoms vary by age, but can include: fever/chills, cough, muscle aches, runny or stuffy nose, fatigue, sore throat, and headache. Those with a suppressed immune system, such as the elderly, young, pregnant, or those who are already sick, also commonly get secondary infections such as pneumonia, which can lead to another set of issues.

Why get the vaccine?
The Flu vaccine can:
- Prevent you from getting flu
- Make the flu less severe if you do get it
- Keep you from spreading the flu to your family and those who cannot get the flu vaccine (herd immunity is doing its best here!)

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**Words of Wisdom**

**Freshman & Sophomores** - now is your time to really work on maintaining a great GPA and finding volunteer and leadership opportunities around you! You aren't yet at a point where you need to worry about studying for the MCAT or asking for letters of recommendation, but it is a great time to look into what courses are required to apply to most medical schools and make sure that you plan to take these during your undergraduate course load. Use the calendars and resource lists provided to you to see what courses you should be taking and what volunteer opportunities exist near you!

**Juniors** - do you know who will be writing your letters of recommendation? Take some time to think about professors that you’ve worked closely with who might be able to write you a good letter. Start putting together a list of your activities and leadership positions you’ve held to make writing a letter easier.
when it comes time for you to ask. Be sure to have a non-science professor in mind also!

**Seniors** - waiting to hear back about interviews or prepping for an interview that's already been scheduled? Check out your school's career services for mock interview opportunities or ask your pre-health advisor to practice interviewing with you. Student Doctor Network is a great resource for interview questions. Resources > Interview feedback > Select School.

Want more information about getting through your pre-med years? Check out this weekly newsletter that provides lots of great articles about being a pre-med, medical student, and life after medical school!

**PreMedLife: The Magazine for Pre-Medical Students**

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