Influenza, also known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus. Influenza illness is typically characterized by symptoms such as fever, cough, and sore throat. Influenza illness normally resolves on its own, but it can lead to more severe outcomes such as hospitalization or death. Populations at highest risk of severe complications from influenza illness are adults aged 65 and over, children less than age 5, and people with underlying health conditions.

Ways to prevent flu transmission include frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home when sick. One of the best ways to keep from getting the flu is by getting a yearly influenza vaccination.60

All Americans older than 6 months should receive an influenza vaccination. Vaccination is especially important in adults age 65 and older because of their increased risk of severe illness.

The number of adults 65 and older who received a flu shot in the past year has increased slightly since 2005, but is still below the U.S. averages. Florida is still far from the Healthy People 2020 goal of 90% vaccinated each year, with a 2010 rate of 65.6%.

White Floridians over 65 years of age were much more likely to have had a flu shot than both blacks and Hispanics in 2010. Adults 65 and older with a college degree were also more likely than those with less than a high school diploma to have had a flu shot.
According to the CDC, the best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each year.

The number of adults ages 65 and older who received a flu shot in the past year has increased slightly since 2005 but is still below U.S. averages and the Healthy People 2020 goal.

White Floridians ages 65 and older were 1.7 times more likely than their black counterparts to get a flu shot in the past year.

Adult Floridians ages 65 and older with college degrees were more likely than those with lower educational attainment to have gotten a flu shot.

### ADULTS 65+ WHO RECEIVED A FLU SHOT IN THE PAST YEAR BY COUNTY

(Percent; Quartile; 2010)

- Alachua: 56.6, 4
- Baker: 67.7, 2
- Bay: 68.9, 2
- Bradford: 51.6, 4
- Brevard: 70.5, 1
- Broward: 60.6, 4
- Calhoun: 63.4, 3
- Charlotte: 67.5, 2
- Citrus: 72.4, 1
- Clay: 69.9, 1
- Collier: 74.8, 1
- Columbia: 60.3, 4
- Dixie: 51.7, 4
- Duval: 60.9, 3
- Escambia: 62.4, 3
- Flagler: 67.0, 2
- Franklin: 65.3, 3
- Gadsden: 61.0, 3
- Gilchrist: 57.4, 4
- Glades: 69.6, 2
- Gulf: 55.4, 4
- Hamilton: 56.4, 4
- Hardee: 67.2, 2
- Hendry: 60.2, 4
- Hernando: 61.5, 3
- Highlands: 70.2, 1
- Hillsborough: 63.3, 3
- Holmes: 62.6, 3
- Indian River: 71.8, 1
- Jackson: 64.8, 3
- Jefferson: 53.6, 4
- Lafayette: 72.3, 1
- Lake: 71.9, 1
- Lee: 72.9, 1
- Leon: 73.9, 1
- Levy: 51.9, 4
- Liberty: 68.5, 2
- Madison: 52.3, 4
- Manatee: 68.1, 2
- Marion: 68.1, 2
- Martin: 70.6, 1
- Monroe: 66.3, 3
- Nassau: 66.8, 2
- Okaloosa: 70.7, 1
- Okeechobee: 60.2, 4
- Orange: 61.7, 3
- Osceola: 56.0, 4
- Palm Beach: 73.7, 1
- Pasco: 64.4, 3
- Pinellas: 68.1, 2
- Polk: 62.1, 3
- Putnam: 54.9, 4
- Santa Rosa: 66.9, 2
- Sarasota: 69.6, 2
- Seminole: 61.3, 3
- St. Johns: 76.4, 1
- St. Lucie: 72.6, 2
- Sumter: 74.6, 1
- Suwannee: 61.3, 3
- Taylor: 59.3, 4
- Union: 65.9, 3
- Volusia: 74.5, 1
- Wakulla: 68.4, 2
- Walton: 68.3, 2
- Washington: 61.6, 3

Source: Florida Behavioral Risk Factor Survey