

Personal Stories: Why Flu Vaccination Matters

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Woman #1] It just hit so suddenly. It-it just took me by surprise.

[Man] We didn't think, 'Oh, no. There's a chance that she could get really sick and die.'

[Woman #1] We literally watched her dying. You know, her body was--was dying inside.

[Woman #2] How does this happen? It's not supposed to. Here, we had this beautiful, perfect, healthy baby boy and all of a sudden, within a day, he's gone.

[Dr. Jeanne Santoli] Influenza is a very serious disease. About a hundred children die every year from influenza. Now, that's a relatively small number. But every death from influenza is a tragedy, especially when we have a vaccine to prevent influenza.

[Woman #3] I looked at Martin 'cause he's old enough to make his own decisions and to tell me how he's feeling. And I looked at Martin and I said, "Martin, what do you want to do? You want to go to the three o'clock appointment or do you want to go to the emergency room?" And he says, "No, mom. I think I need to go to the emergency room." When I think of Martin, it always brings a smile to my face because he was such a good kid.

[Man] Really kind of the whole day was just kind of like a long period of adjusting to what the truth was, which was that she wasn't going to survive that day.

[Woman #4] She had the symptoms of a cold. It seemed, you know, just runny nose and, you know, your typical cold. But, she couldn't shake it. And, she had four days of fever. And, I think that might have been our first indicator that something was a little more serious than just a cold.

[Dr. Jeanne Santoli] The symptoms of influenza are--some of them are similar to the symptoms of the common cold--like a runny nose, or stuffy nose, a cough, or congestion. But with influenza, you'll also see people--see people feeling feverish, very tired, having muscle aches and headaches, things we don't usually see with the common cold. And while anyone can have influenza, it's more serious for certain groups of people and can lead to complications that are much more serious than the common cold.

[Woman #1] The flu has changed our lives. It took . . . I mean, it took one of my children. The flu can-kill your healthy children.

[Woman #2] When Ian got the flu, he died. My other two boys who got vaccinated never had a symptom.

[Woman #1] I could've got Emily a flu shot. And I should've got Emily a flu shot. I should've gotten all the kids flu shotS.

[Woman #2] Please get it. I-I don't want you sitting here having to talk about the loss of your child.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.