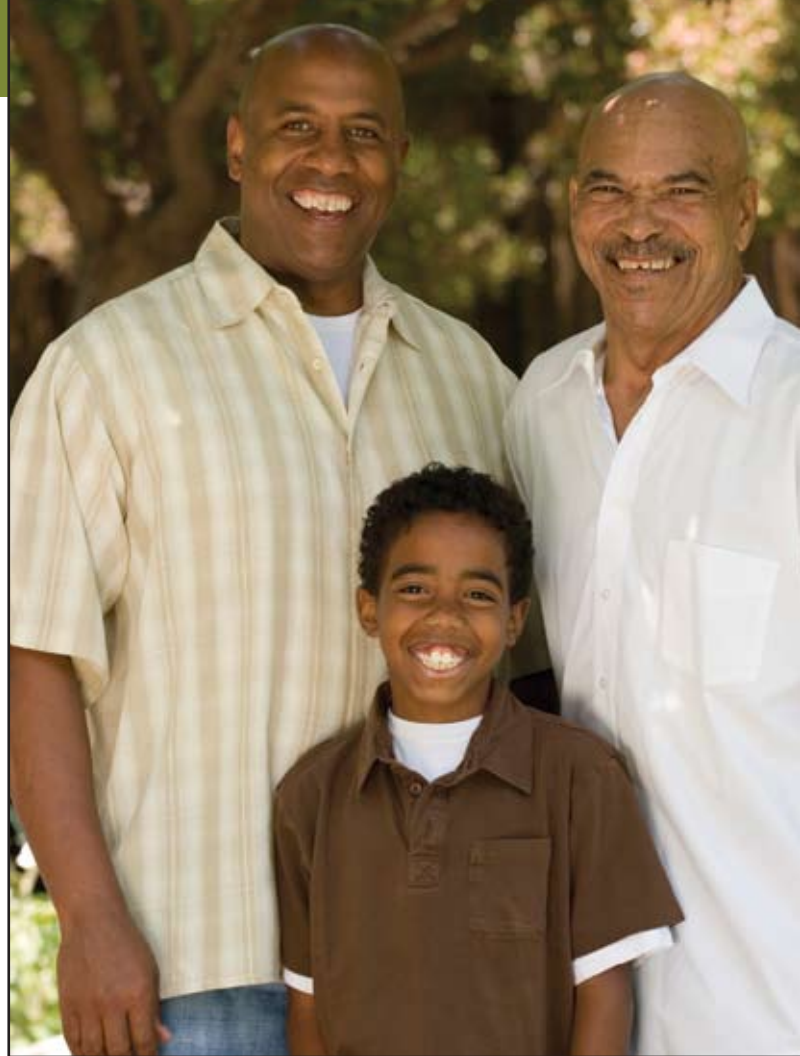


**Question:** I just heard about a study that showed the flu shot doesn't protect elderly people from becoming sick or dying. My father is a healthy 78-year-old who doesn't like needles; does he really need one?

**Answer:** Yes, it is very important for your father to receive the influenza vaccine. The flu vaccine helps to protect the elderly against influenza. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends the influenza vaccine for all persons 65 years of age and older.

The study you are referring to included more than 700 elderly people. It was conducted by researchers associated with the University of Alberta and published in 2008. In this study, half the participants received the flu shot, and the other half did not receive the shot. After reviewing all the data and controlling for a variety of factors, it was determined that the reduction of death rates was related to many factors, not just receiving the influenza vaccine.

The result of this study has not changed the recommendation from NACI. The flu shot offers protection to the elderly, and the more people who are immunized in a community, the less virus that is around -- and this protects us all. It is one more healthy behaviour which contributes to the reduction of illness and death rates amongst all persons.



## References:

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For more information, go to [immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)

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