



# The Mortar & Pestle

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## Stafford Pharmacy and Home Healthcare



### MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS: ANXIETY

Anxiety is a significant medical condition that affects many people. Unfortunately, many people suffering from anxiety or other mental health disorders are embarrassed or worried about what others may think. It is important to remember that mental illness, just like physical illness, often requires medical treatment. There is no shame in admitting that an individual may be suffering from a mental illness. Most have left the mental illness stigma behind, just as we have many old, outdated beliefs.

#### What is anxiety?

Generalized anxiety disorder is a condition of ongoing excessive stress or worry. These feelings can be quite distressing and can greatly interfere with the person's daily life and activities.

Other anxiety disorders include panic disorder, social anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, phobias, and post-traumatic stress disorder, all of which may present differently.

#### What are the symptoms of anxiety?

People with generalized anxiety disorder may feel:

- Feelings of tenseness and irritability
- Difficulty concentrating
- Headaches
- Sweating
- Heart palpitations
- Feelings of choking or shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Restlessness or tiredness
- Difficulty sleeping

Mental Illness Awareness Week is a yearly campaign across Canada to raise awareness and reduce stigma of mental illness. It takes place this year on October 6-12, 2013.

For more information, please visit <http://camimh.ca/mental-illness-awareness-week-english/about-miaw/>

#### Who is affected by anxiety?

Anxiety affects approximately 2-3% of adults. It usually begins in adulthood, and women are more likely to be affected than men.

#### How is anxiety treated?

There are many different treatments for anxiety, including medications and therapy. Some therapies help you change negative patterns of thinking so that you can stay calm in stressful situations. Others teach relaxation techniques like deep breathing and visualization to help control anxiety.

There are also several types of medications that can be used to help control anxiety symptoms. People with anxiety may benefit from trying medications, therapy, or both.

***If you think you or someone you know may be suffering from an anxiety disorder, speak with a medical professional like your doctor or pharmacist today. Don't suffer in silence – anxiety is a curable illness.***

## GET YOUR FLU VACCINATION!

Seasonal influenza (flu) is a contagious viral respiratory disease that causes thousands of deaths every year. Thankfully, there is a simple way to help prevent it: the flu vaccine.

### Should I get the flu vaccine?

Yes! It is recommended for everyone over six months of age who is able to get the vaccine!

As well, if any of the following apply to you, you are considered high risk for influenza-related complications and it is **especially** important that you get the vaccine if possible:

- Seniors (65 years or older); children 6-59 months old; pregnant women
- Aboriginal people
- People living in nursing homes or long-term care facilities
- People with certain medical conditions like diabetes, cancer, renal (kidney) disease, heart disease, immune suppression, blood disorders, severe obesity, and asthma or chronic lung disease



If you live or work with anyone who falls into any of the above categories, it is also essential for you to get vaccinated in order to avoid infecting them.

### Why should I get vaccinated?

Every year, 10-20% of people become infected with the influenza virus. In Canada, the flu is responsible for 20,000 hospitalizations and 2000-8000 deaths yearly.

Even if you do not believe you will get sick, you could infect other people. Certain people are unable to receive the vaccine, and they rely on other people becoming vaccinated to prevent the spread of the virus. The flu vaccine helps protect you as well as the people around you. It can prevent influenza illness in about 70-90% of people.



### When should I get vaccinated?

Since different strains of the influenza virus are always appearing, a new vaccine is developed each year. This means you need to be vaccinated every year. The best time is October-December.

### How and where can I get vaccinated?

If you are at least six months of age and you live, work, or go to school in Alberta, getting the flu vaccine is **free**! Two forms of the vaccine are available: a “flu shot” usually injected into the muscle of the arm, and a nasal spray (FluMist®). Based on your age or medical conditions, one form may be a better choice for you.



Flu vaccinations will be available in public health flu clinics and some pharmacies.

***At Stafford Pharmacy, our pharmacists administer flu shots and flu nasal sprays every flu season on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. For more details, look for signs in the store starting in mid-October.***

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