



# Good Neighbor Script

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY | SEPTEMBER 2023

## Who Is at Highest Risk From the Flu?

Every year, about 8% of people in the U.S. get the flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Although the flu can make anyone sick regardless of their age or health, some people are more at risk of serious flu complications.

Getting the seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu and reduce the risk of serious complications. If possible, the CDC recommends getting vaccinated in September or October for optimal coverage during flu season.

Here's what else you need to know about who's most at risk from the flu and how to protect them.

### Infants and young children

Because their immune system isn't fully developed, children under age 5 face a higher risk of serious flu complications. To protect them, follow these steps.

- Get vaccinated while you're breastfeeding. The vaccine helps you develop antibodies that you can pass onto your baby while breastfeeding, according to the CDC.
- Get your baby vaccinated as soon as they are eligible. Infants can get a flu vaccine as early as 6 months old. If they become eligible partway through flu season, it still helps to get them vaccinated.
- Make sure all household members or close contacts of babies are vaccinated, including siblings, grandparents, and any caregivers.

### Pregnant women

Your immune system changes during pregnancy. Getting a fever during pregnancy can harm a developing baby. It's been linked to neural tube defects and other adverse outcomes. To protect yourself and your unborn baby from the flu during pregnancy:

- Get the flu vaccine. According to the CDC, the flu vaccine reduces a pregnant woman's risk of being hospitalized with the flu by about 40%. The vaccine you get also protects your newborn baby during the first few months of life, before they are eligible for a vaccine.
- Make sure all household members gets the flu shot as well.

### People aged 65+

As you get older, your immune system doesn't work as well as it used to, so it has a harder time fighting off the flu.

An estimated 70% to 85% of seasonal flu-related deaths occur in people age 65 and older, according to the CDC.

If you're 65 or older, the CDC recommends that you get a high-dose flu vaccine or an adjuvanted flu vaccine. Ask your pharmacist which flu vaccine they recommend for you.

### People with chronic health conditions

If you have a chronic medical condition — even if you're younger than 65 — getting the flu can make these conditions worse. Some of the most common conditions made worse by the flu include:

- Asthma and lung disease. Even in people whose asthma is well controlled, the flu can worsen airway and lung inflammation. Children and adults who have asthma are more likely to develop pneumonia after getting the flu.
- Diabetes. The flu can make it harder for you to control your blood sugar levels. About 30% of adults hospitalized with the flu have diabetes.
- Heart disease and stroke. Half of the adults who end up in the hospital because of the flu have heart disease, and having the flu can also increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

### How to protect yourself and others

Along with getting a seasonal flu vaccine, the CDC recommends that you do the following to protect yourself and those around you:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects if you or someone in your household is sick.
- Stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without using fever-reducing medication.

### What to do if you do get the flu?

Get tested ASAP. Your local pharmacy or doctor can help with the testing. There are several prescription medications available to treat higher-risk people with the flu, but you need to start them within 48 hours of when the symptoms appear.

## HEALTH & FITNESS

### How to Improve Asthma and Allergies by Improving Indoor Air Quality

Asthma and allergies can be caused by a variety of airborne triggers, such as pollen and pet dander. Particulates and smog in the air can also trigger asthma.

While you can't always avoid triggers, there's a lot you can do to minimize exposure, especially when you're inside. Here are four ways to improve indoor air quality and minimize allergy and asthma symptoms.

**Vacuum regularly.** This prevents allergens on the floor from getting kicked back up into the air. Use a vacuum with a HEPA-filter so that the allergens don't get blown out the back of the vacuum and back into the air.

**Remove carpeting if you can.** Carpeting traps dust, dust mites, pollen, and pet dander — all potential allergens. Hard surfaces, such as wood or laminate, are far easier to remove allergens from.

**Turn on the vent over your stove every time you cook.** Cooking releases smoke into the air. Gas stoves also emit nitrogen dioxide and PM 2.5. Smoke, particulates, and nitrogen dioxide are all potential asthma triggers. Running the vent while you cook, ideally with a nearby window cracked open, can help remove these allergens from the air.

**Open (and close) your windows.** Fresh air brings the indoor carbon dioxide level down, helping you feel more awake. It also helps dilute indoor air pollutants. However, if someone in your house has a pollen allergy, try keeping the windows shut during peak pollen season — especially during the times of day when pollen peaks in your area.

If you live somewhere prone to outdoor air pollution, check the air quality at [airnow.gov](http://airnow.gov) first.



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## SEPTEMBER RECIPE

# Apple Crisp Bars

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Serves
20 minutes	55 minutes	1 hour 15 minutes	12

These apple crisp bars feature a buttery almond flour crust layered with fresh, seasonal apples and an oat and almond streusel topping. Everyone will love this gluten-free treat that's also high in fiber from almonds, apples, and oats.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups almond flour
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 5 tablespoons cornstarch (divided)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 10 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (divided)
- 3 cups of peeled, cored, sliced apples (3 to 4 apples)
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1/3 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds

### Tools

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Food processor
- Spatula
- Chef's knife
- 8x8 baking pan

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and place the oven rack in the middle position. Line an 8x8 baking pan with parchment paper, leaving extra hanging over the sides. Spray lightly with cooking spray.
2. Combine the almond flour, 1/4 cup of sugar, 3 tablespoons of cornstarch, and salt in a food processor with a chopping blade. Pulse the mixture 5 times to combine the dry ingredients.
3. Sprinkle 6 tablespoons of the cold butter cubes over the almond flour mixture and pulse the food processor about 25 times or until the dough resembles wet sand.
4. Pour the mixture into the baking pan and press it evenly over the bottom of the pan.
5. Bake the crust for 15 minutes or until it turns light gold. Remove the pan from the oven.
6. While the crust bakes, toss the sliced apples with the remaining 2 tablespoons cornstarch, 2 tablespoons of sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Gently mix to combine.
7. Place the oats, brown sugar, almonds, and the remaining 4 tablespoons of cold butter cubes in the food processor. Pulse 15 times to combine the streusel.
8. Place the apples over the slightly cooled cooked crust. Sprinkle the streusel topping over the apples and gently pat everything down with a spatula. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until the topping is light gold.
9. Let the apple crisp cool and then refrigerate for at least 4 hours. Lift the crisp out of the pan using the edges of the parchment paper. Cut into 12 pieces.

### KIDS CAN!

- Add the ingredients to the food processor
- Press the shortbread dough into the pan
- Layer the apples
- Sprinkle the streusel topping

## ASK A PHARMACIST

# How Can I Tell the Difference Between a Cold and Allergies?



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It's that time of the year when many of us suffer from a runny nose, headache, and feeling more tired than usual, but how do you know if those sniffles and sneezes are the start of a cold or allergies? The best way is to look at your symptoms, how fast they started, how long they last, and any patterns in which you experience them.

A cold is caused by a virus, most commonly rhinovirus, and can be spread from person to person. The common cold typically lasts for seven to ten days, with the symptoms resolving on their own and requiring no treatment.

Allergies are caused by an immune system reaction related to environmental exposures and cannot be spread from person to person, like a cold can. Triggers for allergies can include dust mites, pets, mold, pollen, and cigarette smoke. Unlike a cold, allergies can continue for as long as a person is exposed, with symptoms that come and go based on the environment.

Fever, sore throat, runny nose, and fatigue with symptoms that slowly get worse before getting better in seven to ten days are likely a cold. Runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, itchy or watery eyes, and wheezing that starts suddenly are more likely to be allergies related to environmental exposures, like cats and pollen. If you have any questions related to allergies, colds, or their treatment options, ask your local pharmacist!

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## LOCAL LOVE

# Alwood Pharmacy

Serving Alpha, Illinois, for more than 40 years



"My favorite thing about being a pharmacist is working and getting to know my patients and implementing changes that provide a great service to them."

**Donna Merideth**  
Owner and Pharmacist

**What has been the most significant change within your pharmacy over the past five years, and how has it helped you serve your patients better?**

I've brought on many extra services over the past five years — vaccination has been the best for my patients.

**What is your favorite thing about being a pharmacist?**

My favorite thing about being a pharmacist is working and getting to know my patients and implementing changes that provide a great service to them.

**What makes your pharmacy unique?**

My pharmacy is unique because we're in a rural community, in a 100-year-old building, and offer many services to our patients.

**What do you think your patients love most about your pharmacy?**

Our patients love our great service and hometown feel.

**What are your favorite ways to get involved with your community?**

I get involved with my community by offering vaccinations to local schools and help raise money for mental health awareness programs in high schools.

**What excites you most about the future of independent pharmacy?**

I'm excited about the future of independent pharmacy because I feel like consumers are starting to see the value in our service.

**What does *Locally Loved* mean to you?**

*Locally loved* means having the MOST loyal customers, and I know they LOVE having my pharmacy in their community! I am grateful for that!