

**Mayo Clinic Minute: Flu during a pandemic**

VIDEO	AUDIO
	"In most places, flu starts circulating by November, December. So it's recommended that everyone complete their flu vaccine by October."
	Flu cases were low in 2020. And health experts attribute that to the COVID-19 pandemic and the preventive measures put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
<b>Priya Sampathkumar, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic</b>	"We're afraid that with, in a lot of places, masking recommendations being relaxed, that flu will spread more easily. And the fact that no one had flu last year means there's a lot more people who are vulnerable this year."
	Flu and COVID-19 are caused by respiratory viruses and have similar symptoms.
	"It's very, very hard — almost impossible — to distinguish the two just based on symptoms. Some cases of COVID can be very mild and present exactly like the flu. Some cases of flu can be very severe and present like COVID. So really, the only way to know for sure when you have a respiratory illness is to get tested."
	And if you haven't been vaccinated for COVID-19 yet or need a third dose or a booster, you can get your flu shot and COVID vaccination at the same time.
	"It's perfectly safe to get both at the same time."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jason Howland.