

**MADI'S STORY:**  
**FLU VACCINE 101**  
**YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS**  
**THIS CLASS!**



Ages 13 - 17



FEATURING:

**MADI**

The star of this book

My name is Madi and I live with my Mom, Dad, and our dog, Swayze.

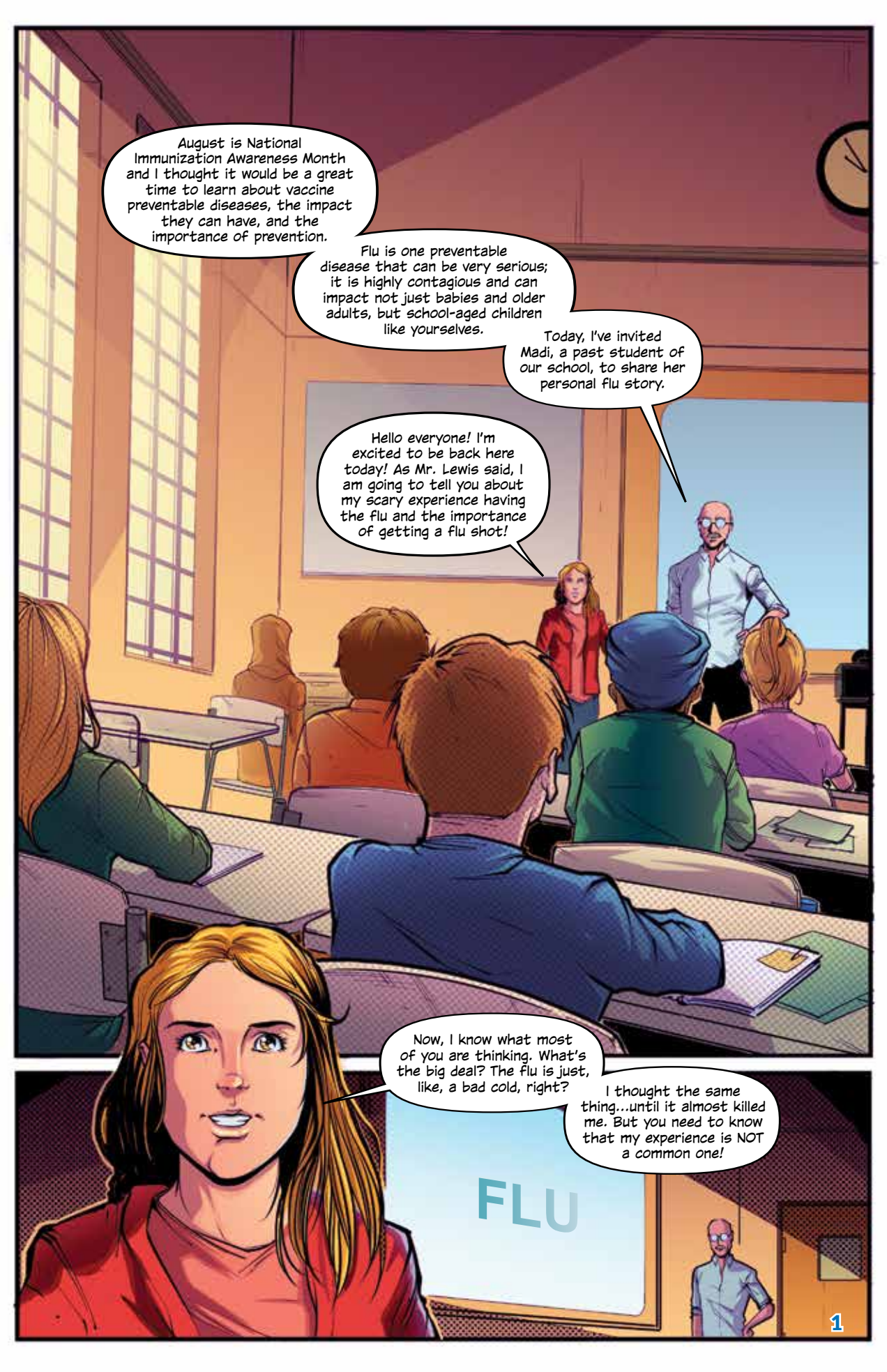
I'm 21 but I clearly remember when I was 12 years old and became really sick with the flu. I even spent several weeks in the hospital! Now, the flu doesn't usually make people as sick as I was, but I would hate to think that anyone would have to go through what I experienced! It's important to get your flu vaccine every year. I became sick with the flu the one year I missed it.

Sharing my story with you is so important to me. After reading it, I hope that you better understand what the flu is and how the flu vaccine helps stop people getting the flu. The flu can affect anyone, even healthy and sporty people like me. The best way to help avoid getting the flu is to make sure you get your flu vaccine every year!

Madi Allen





A comic book illustration of a classroom. A male teacher with glasses and a light blue shirt stands at the front, gesturing towards a female student named Madi who is standing and speaking. Several other students are seated at desks, looking towards the front. Large windows on the left let in bright light. A clock is visible on the wall to the right.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month and I thought it would be a great time to learn about vaccine preventable diseases, the impact they can have, and the importance of prevention.

Flu is one preventable disease that can be very serious; it is highly contagious and can impact not just babies and older adults, but school-aged children like yourselves.

Today, I've invited Madi, a past student of our school, to share her personal flu story.

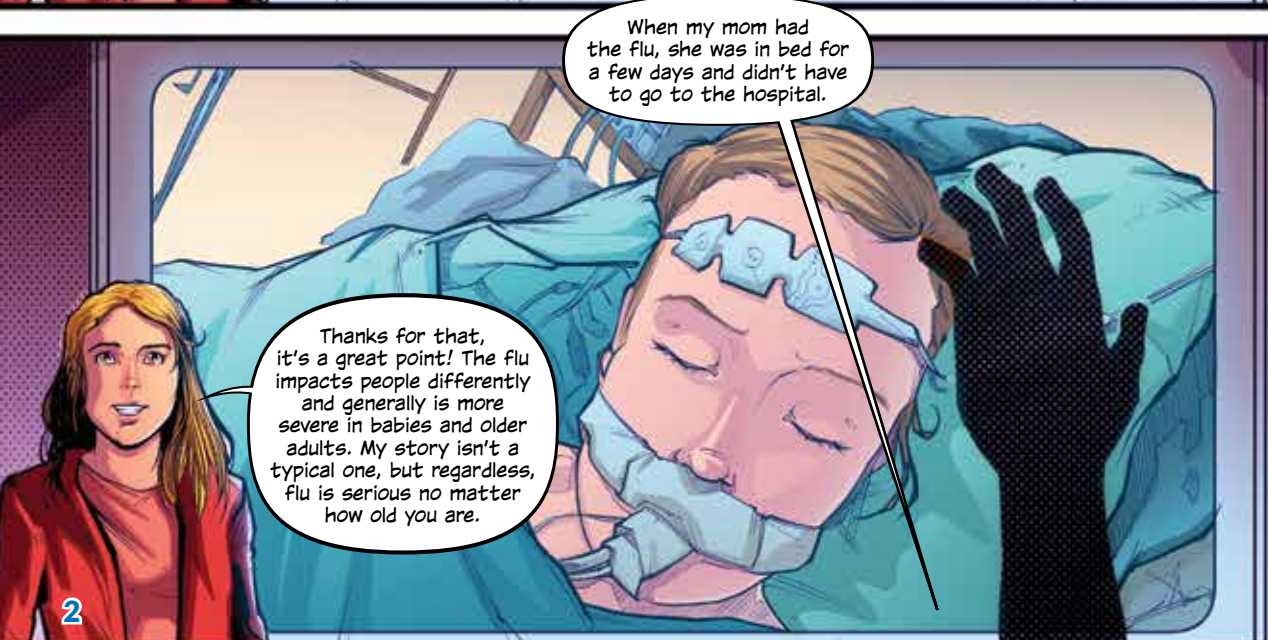
Hello everyone! I'm excited to be back here today! As Mr. Lewis said, I am going to tell you about my scary experience having the flu and the importance of getting a flu shot!

Now, I know what most of you are thinking. What's the big deal? The flu is just, like, a bad cold, right?

I thought the same thing...until it almost killed me. But you need to know that my experience is NOT a common one!

FLU







| SYMPTOMS                  | COLD                | FLU                  | *COVID-19            |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Fever                     | Uncommon            | High Fever<br>Common | High Fever<br>Common |
| Aches                     | Very little         | Common               | Sometimes            |
| Chills                    | Uncommon            | Common               | Common               |
| Tiredness,<br>weakness    | Sometimes           | Common               | Common               |
| Sneezing                  | Common              | Sometimes            | Uncommon             |
| Cough                     | Mild to<br>moderate | Common               | Common               |
| Stuffy nose               | Common              | Sometimes            | Uncommon             |
| Sore throat               | Common              | Sometimes            | Sometimes            |
| Headache                  | Uncommon            | Sometimes            | Sometimes            |
| Difficulty<br>breathing   | Uncommon            | Uncommon             | Sometimes            |
| Loss of taste<br>or smell | Uncommon            | Uncommon             | Sometimes            |

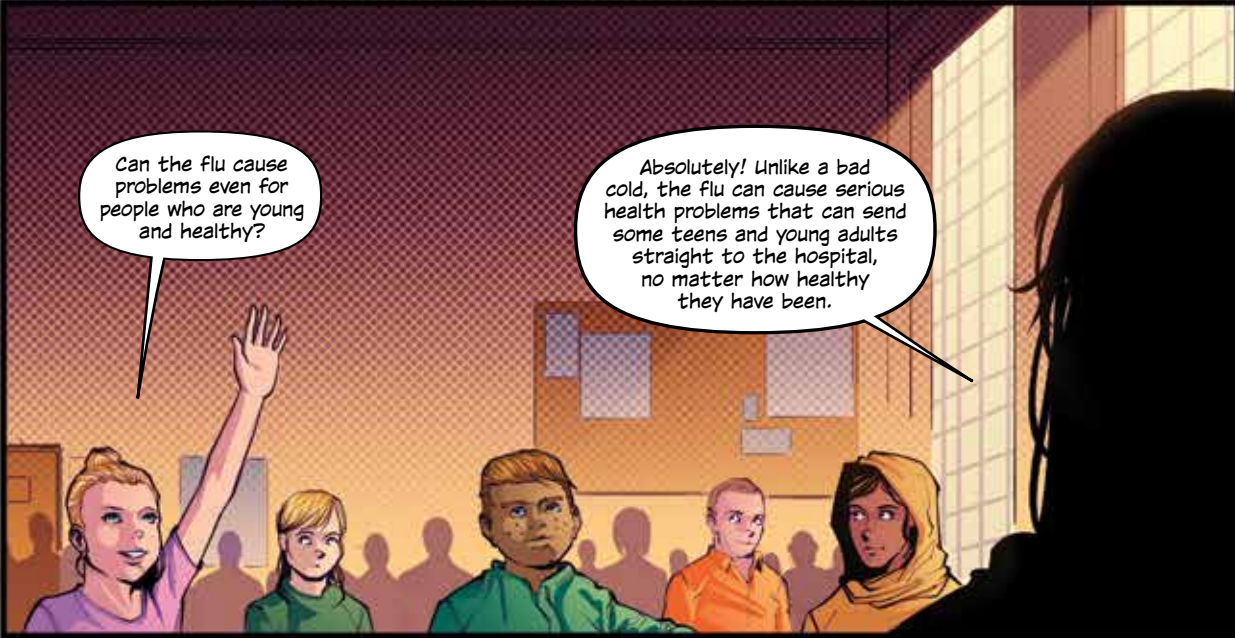
So now you get that the flu is more than just a bad cold, but you're not wrong if they seem pretty similar!

The flu, the cold, and COVID-19 have some of the same symptoms, but the ones from the flu and COVID-19 can be worse!

\*COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus. These are COVID-19 symptoms as of May 2020, per the Centers for Disease Control.








Can the flu cause problems even for people who are young and healthy?

Absolutely! Unlike a bad cold, the flu can cause serious health problems that can send some teens and young adults straight to the hospital, no matter how healthy they have been.



The flu also wasn't a fun sick day where I got to play video games and watch TV!

I felt so sick, I didn't feel like doing anything. I missed out on family, school, sports, and hanging out with friends. It was awful for me!

My entire body ached, all I could do was lay in bed. No matter what I did, I couldn't get comfortable. I felt every movement, including my eyeballs move and it was not pleasant. It hurt!

What exactly causes the flu?

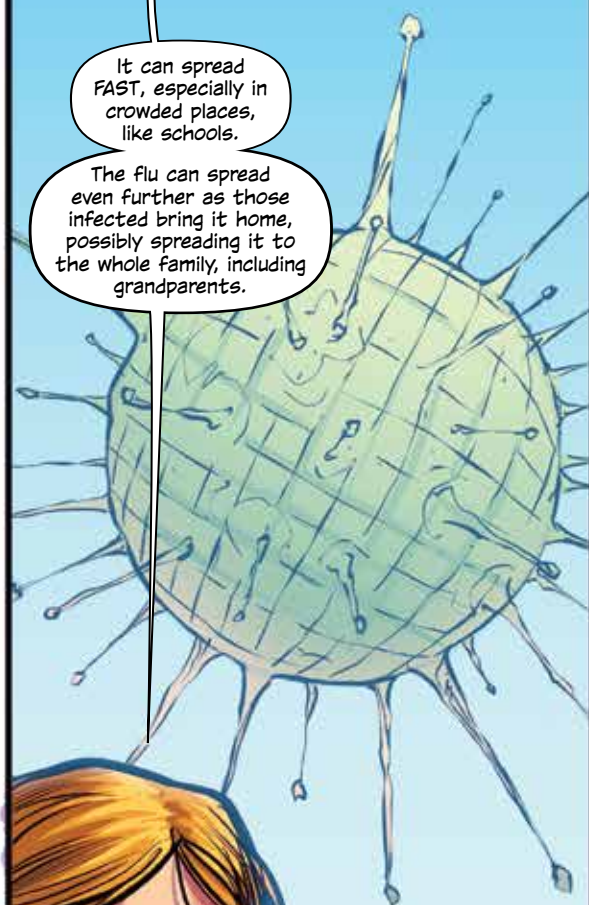


Great question!  
Well, the flu is caused  
by a type of virus.

# INFLUENZA VIRUS

It can spread  
**FAST**, especially in  
crowded places,  
like schools.

The flu can spread  
even further as those  
infected bring it home,  
possibly spreading it to  
the whole family, including  
grandparents.



COUGHING



SNEEZING



TALKING

The reason it  
can spread so fast is  
because the flu virus  
travels in droplets  
through the air.

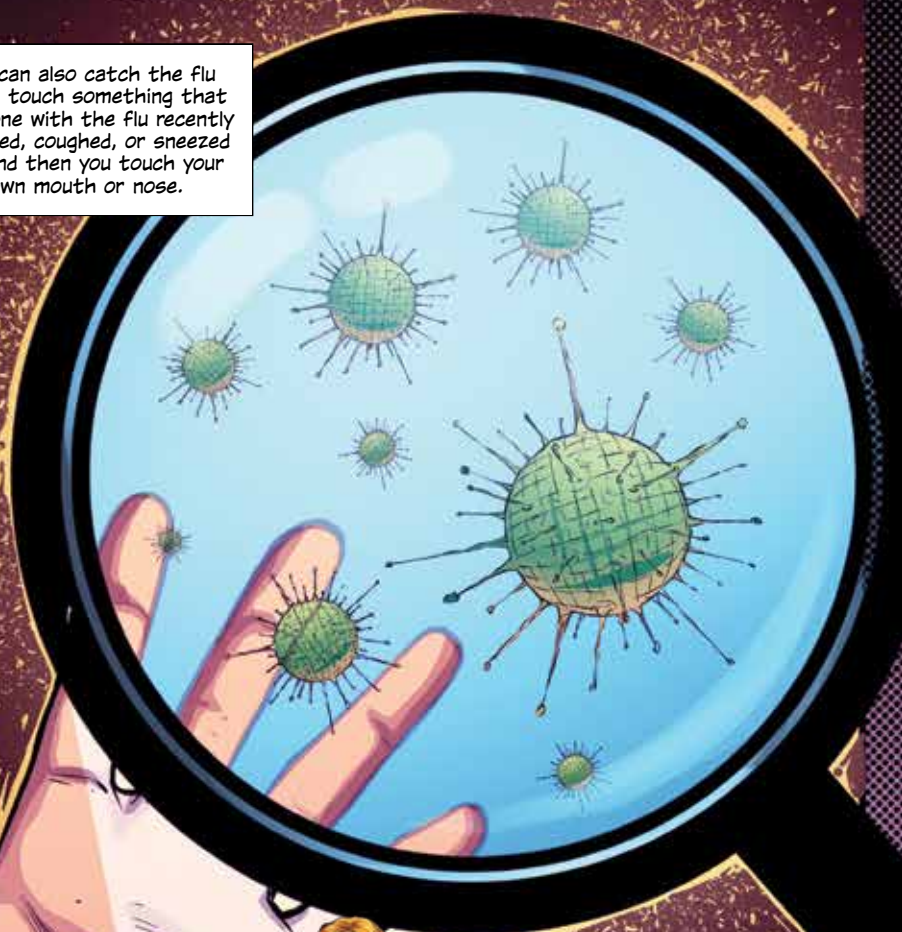
So when a  
sick person coughs,  
sneezes, or even talks  
near you, you could  
get infected!







You can also catch the flu if you touch something that someone with the flu recently touched, coughed, or sneezed on, and then you touch your own mouth or nose.

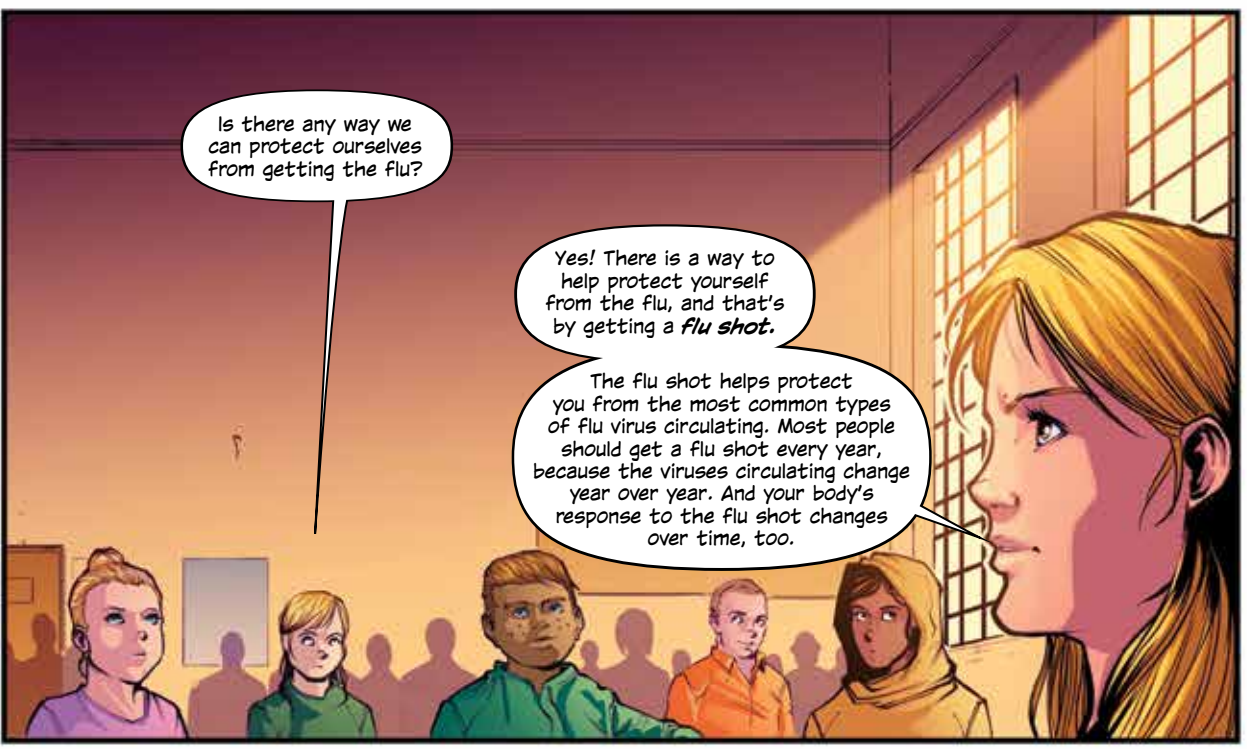


This is why it's so important to *wash your hands!*

You may not know you have the flu until 1 or 2 days later when the symptoms appear.

**BUT** you can still spread it even before you know you have it!






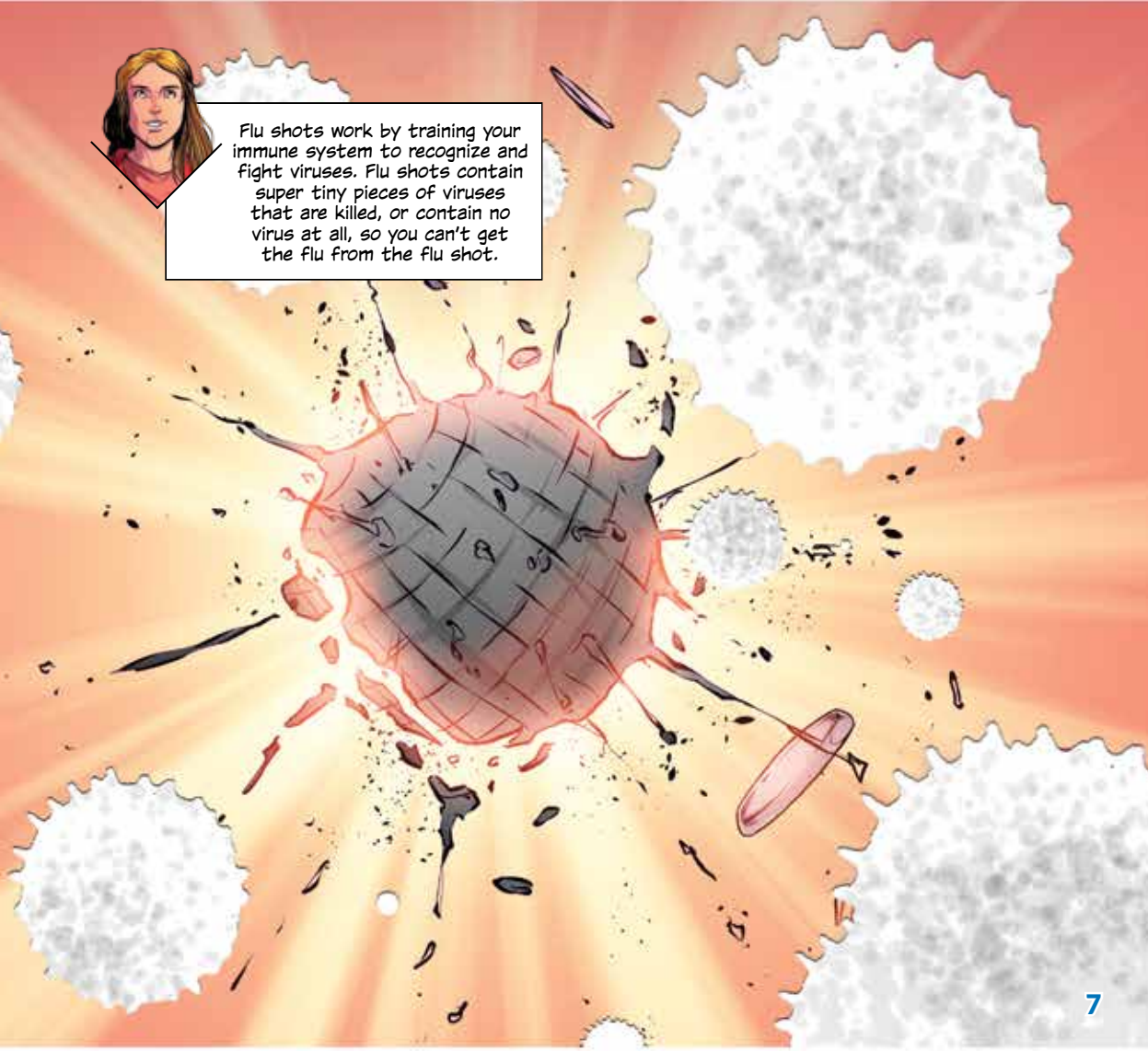
Is there any way we can protect ourselves from getting the flu?

Yes! There is a way to help protect yourself from the flu, and that's by getting a *flu shot*.


The flu shot helps protect you from the most common types of flu virus circulating. Most people should get a flu shot every year, because the viruses circulating change year over year. And your body's response to the flu shot changes over time, too.




Flu shots work by training your immune system to recognize and fight viruses. Flu shots contain super tiny pieces of viruses that are killed, or contain no virus at all, so you can't get the flu from the flu shot.









Now, after a flu shot you may be a little sore, or have a slight fever or some muscle aches. But don't worry, these things usually don't last long.



Does getting the flu shot mean that you won't get the flu?



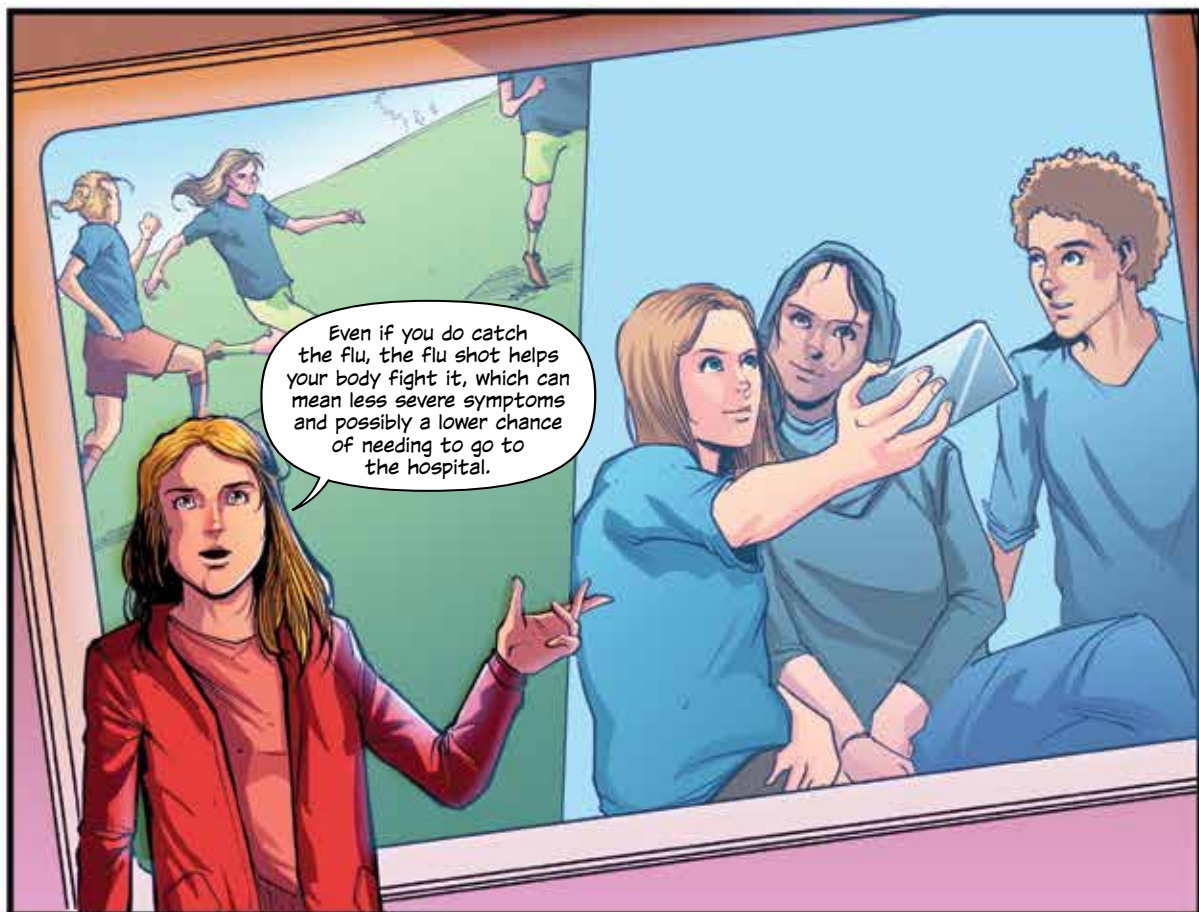
I'm glad you asked that! Although the goal of the flu shot is to help protect you from getting the flu in the first place, there's still a chance you might catch it.



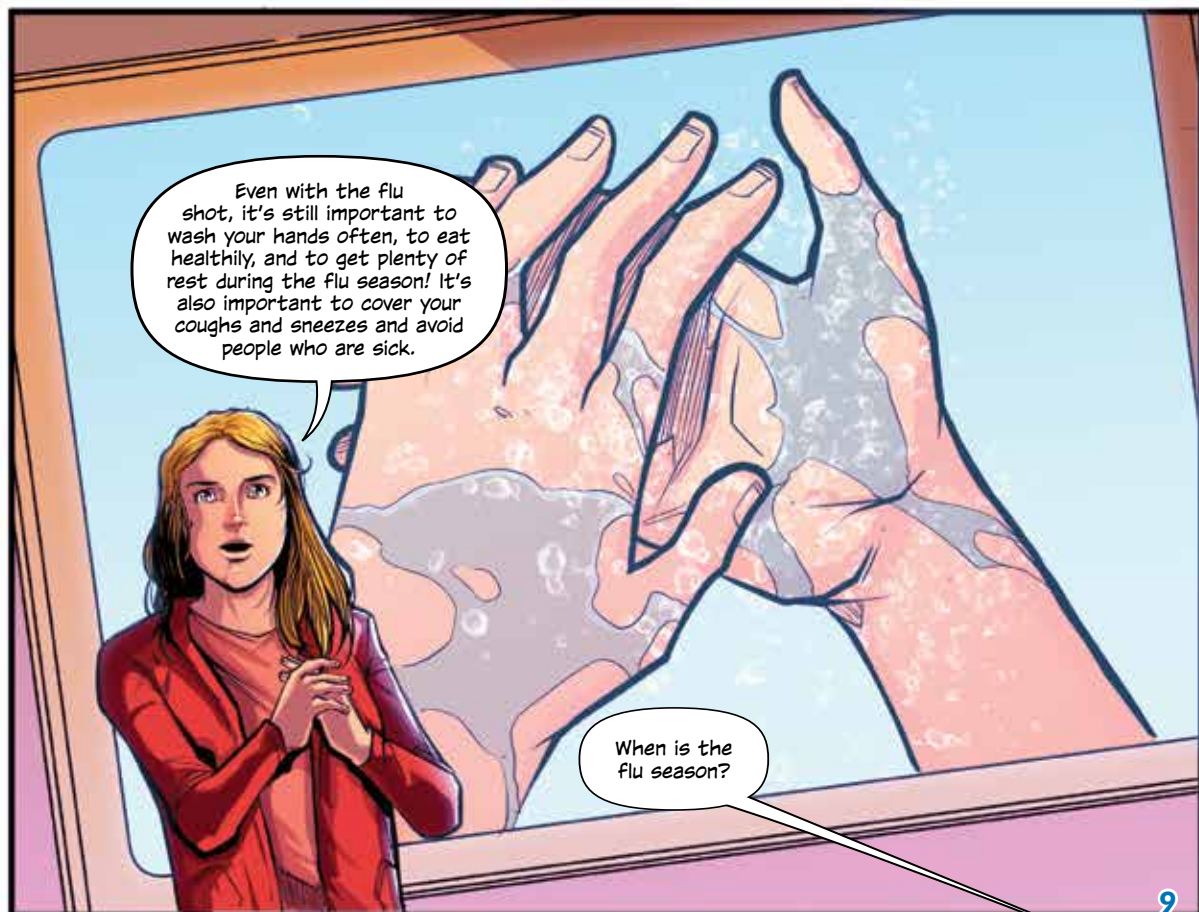
That's because each season there are different flu viruses and everyone's response to the vaccine can be different.








Even if you do catch the flu, the flu shot helps your body fight it, which can mean less severe symptoms and possibly a lower chance of needing to go to the hospital.



Even with the flu shot, it's still important to wash your hands often, to eat healthily, and to get plenty of rest during the flu season! It's also important to cover your coughs and sneezes and avoid people who are sick.

When is the flu season?





| July |     |     |     |     |     |     | August |     |     |     |     |     |     | September |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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| 11   | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 15     | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 12        | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  |
| 18   | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 22     | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 19        | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  |
| 25   | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  | 29     | 30  | 31  |     |     |     |     | 26        | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  |     |

| October |     |     |     |     |     | November |     |     |     |     |     | December |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
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| 31      |     |     |     |     |     |          |     |     |     |     |     |          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

| January |     |     |     |     |     | February |     |     |     |     |     | March |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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| 17      | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23       | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26    | 27  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27  |
| 24      | 25  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30       | 28  |     |     |     |     |       |     | 28  | 29  | 30  |     |     |     |     |
| 31      |     |     |     |     |     |          |     |     |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

| April |     |     |     |     |     | May |     |     |     |     |     | June |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
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|       |     |     |     |     |     |     | 30  | 31  |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

Good question!  
 The flu season typically peaks between January and March, but it can start as early as October and can last all the way to May!



But remember, the flu season is LONG so it's never too late to get your flu shot!

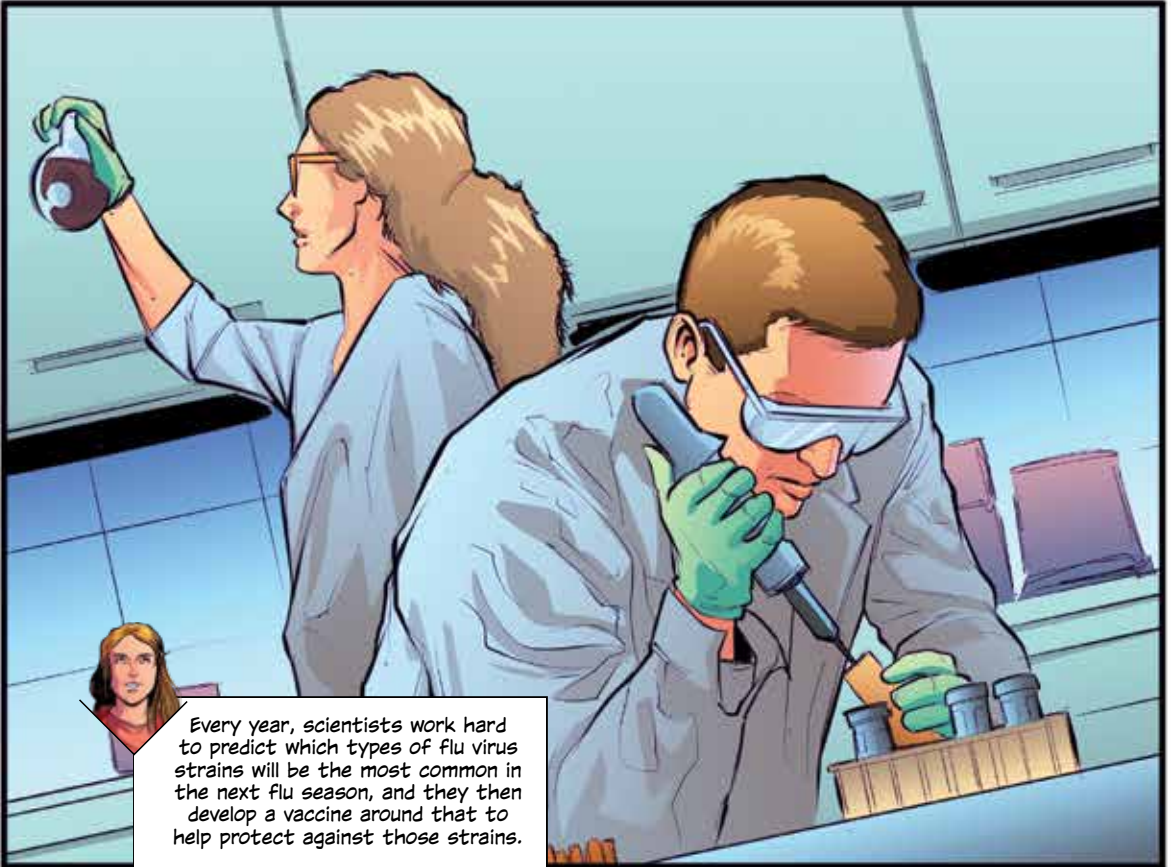
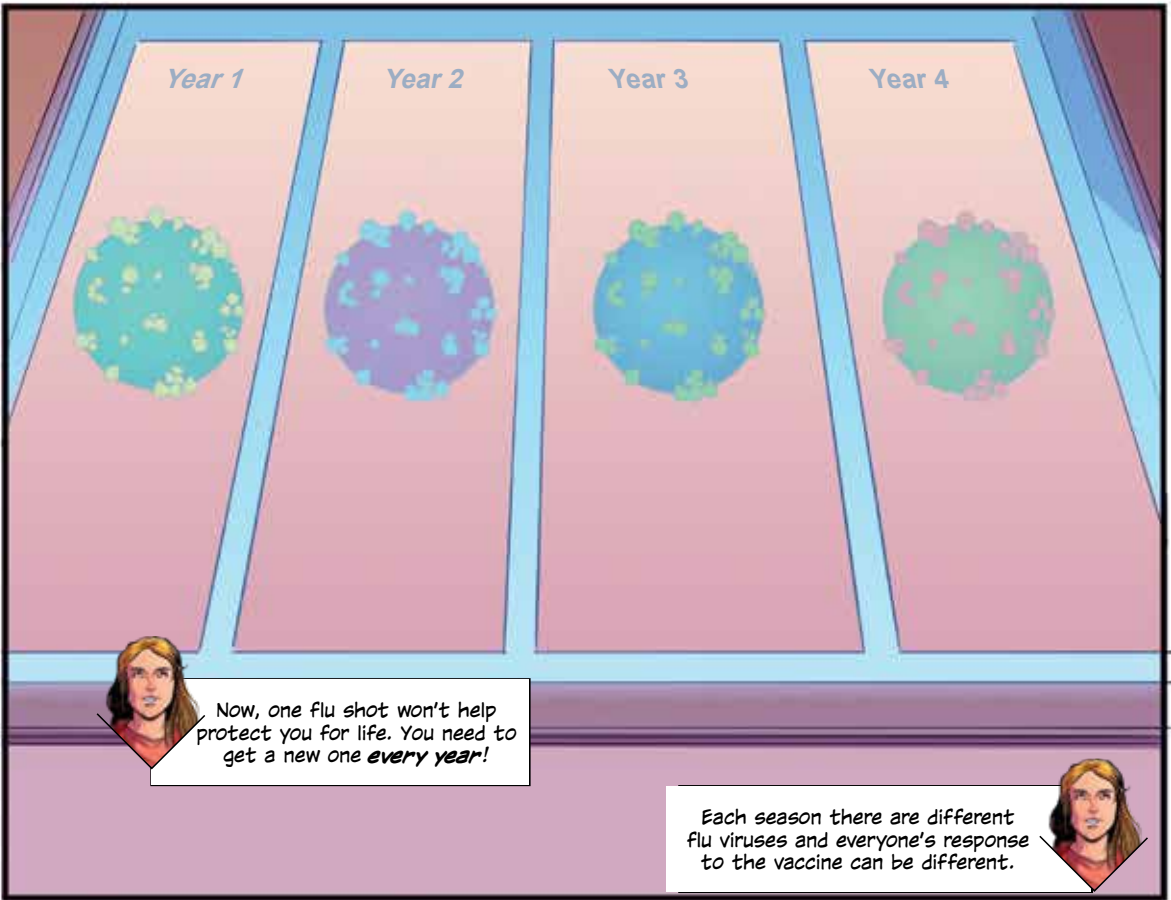
It takes about 2 weeks for the flu shot to train your immune system and to help prepare your body for that season's flu virus.

# OCTOBER

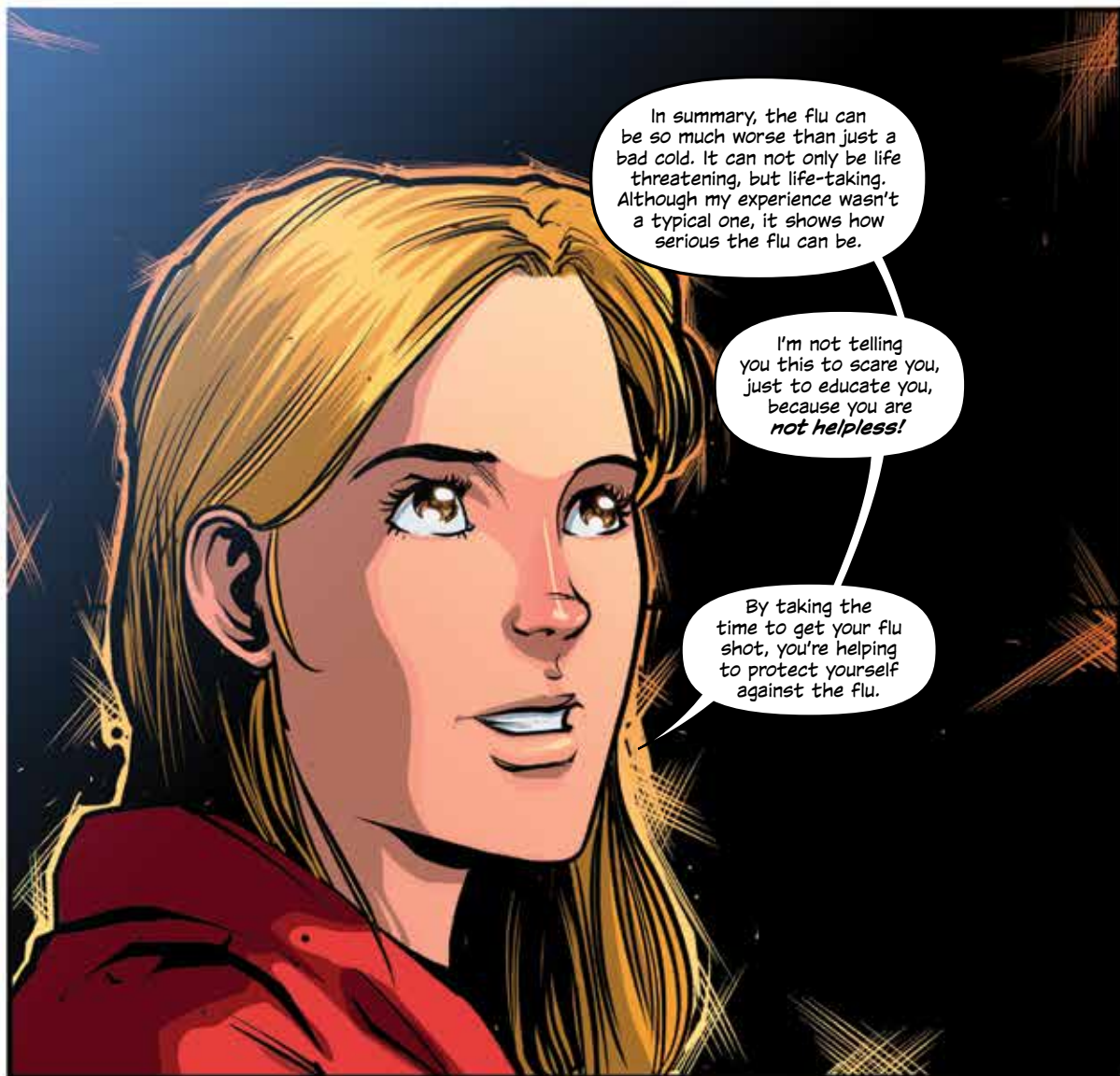
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| 18  | 19  | 20  | 24  |
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Get your flu shot!





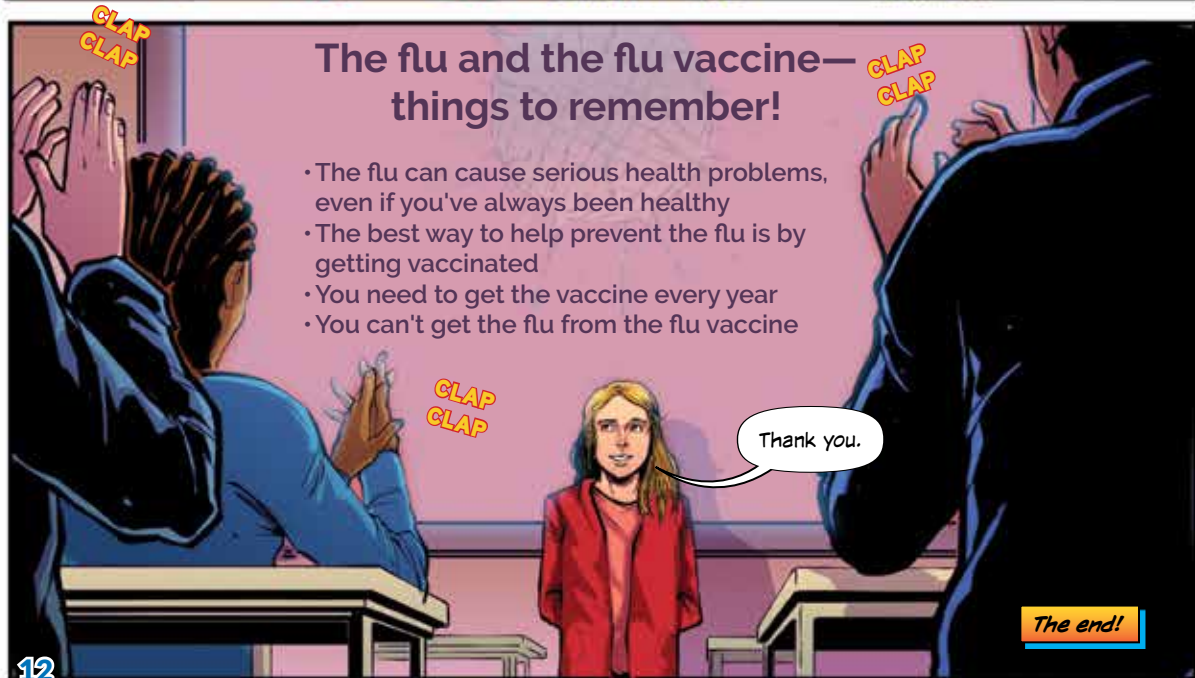




In summary, the flu can be so much worse than just a bad cold. It can not only be life threatening, but life-taking. Although my experience wasn't a typical one, it shows how serious the flu can be.

I'm not telling you this to scare you, just to educate you, because you are **not helpless!**

By taking the time to get your flu shot, you're helping to protect yourself against the flu.



## The flu and the flu vaccine—things to remember!

- The flu can cause serious health problems, even if you've always been healthy
- The best way to help prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated
- You need to get the vaccine every year
- You can't get the flu from the flu vaccine

Thank you.

**The end!**



# **MADI'S STORY: FLU VACCINE 101 YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS CLASS!**

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