

People Who Get a Seasonal Flu Shot Are Twice as Likely to Catch Swine Flu

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As-yet-unpublished Canadian data raises concerns about whether it's a good idea to get a seasonal flu shot.

A series of studies suggests that people who got a seasonal flu shot last year are about twice as likely to catch swine flu as people who didn't.

Journals bar would-be authors from discussing their results publicly before they go through peer review, but the findings have been a poorly kept secret and many in the public health community in Canada have heard about them.

In the meantime, five biopharmaceutical companies have been awarded massive contracts by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for development and production of more than 195 million doses of swine flu vaccine, and health officials are urging everyone to get vaccinated against both the seasonal- and the swine flu this season.

The companies — Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline, MedImmune, Australian drug maker CSL, and Sanofi-Pasteur — will likely make a great deal of money.

CSL has contracts to supply \$180 million worth of bulk antigen to the U.S. MedImmune will supply 40 million doses of its live attenuated nasal spray swine flu vaccine for more than \$450 million. Sanofi-Pasteur is providing more than 100 million doses of monovalent swine flu vaccine, a \$690 million order.

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