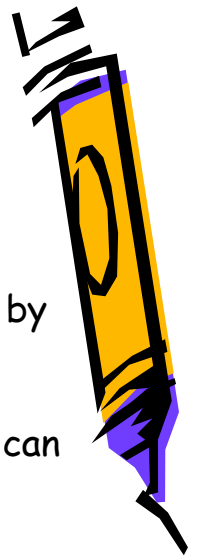


# The Flu: Information for Daycares & Preschools on Flu Vaccines



## What is influenza or “the flu”?

The flu is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by flu viruses. There are many different flu viruses that can make people sick. The flu spreads easily by coughing and sneezing. Many people get the flu every year. Some people can get very sick, and some may even die.

## What are the symptoms of the flu?

People who have the flu often get a high fever, headache, muscle aches, dry cough, and sore throat very quickly. Some people who get the flu have NO symptoms at all, but they can still spread the flu to others.

## How can children be protected from the flu?

Flu vaccine is the single best way to protect children and adults from getting the flu. Flu vaccine is recommended every year for everyone 6 months of age and older. It is also important to make sure children stay home if they are sick.

## What can I do to protect my daycare/preschool children?

**Get a flu vaccine** and encourage others in contact with children to get vaccinated - parents, siblings, teachers and other day care/preschool staff. Getting vaccinated is especially important for those who take care of infants less than 6 months of age because these babies are too young to get flu vaccine.

## Is flu vaccine recommended for children in daycare and preschool?

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) recommend that children 6 months of age and older receive flu vaccine to help them stay healthy.



## **What kinds of flu vaccine can children get?**

Children aged 6-23 months can get a shot, and children aged 2 years and older can get either a shot or a nasal spray. Some children may need 2 doses of flu vaccine. Healthcare providers should determine which type of flu vaccine a child can get and how many doses are needed.

## **How often should children be vaccinated with flu vaccine?**

Flu vaccines can change from year to year, so children and adults need to get flu vaccine every year. The vaccine can be given as soon as it becomes available (as early as August) and throughout the flu season until the vaccine expires (typically June 30).

## **Are flu vaccines safe?**

Yes, flu vaccines are safe and can be given with other vaccines. It is safer to get the flu vaccine than it is to get the flu.

## **Are there side effects from the flu vaccine?**

Most children and adults have little or no problems after getting a flu vaccine. Side effects are often mild, like soreness or redness where the shot was given or a stuffy nose after getting the nasal spray.

## **What if a child's family cannot afford vaccine?**

Children 18 years of age and younger may be eligible to receive publicly purchased vaccines through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. To learn more about the VFC program, contact your local health department or healthcare provider.

For more information about the flu and flu vaccines, contact your healthcare provider or local health department.

Additional information is available:

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: [cdc.gov/flu](http://cdc.gov/flu)

Michigan Department of Community Health: [michigan.gov/flu](http://michigan.gov/flu)

Childhood Influenza Coalition: [preventchildhoodinfluenza.org](http://preventchildhoodinfluenza.org)

Families Fighting Flu: [familiesfightingflu.org](http://familiesfightingflu.org)

March 31, 2015

