

# Flu Shots for Kids

FIGHT FLU



## Information for Parents for the 2017-2018 Flu Season

*Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu shot this season.*

- Only injectable flu vaccines (given as a shot) are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) this season.
- Injectable vaccines include inactivated influenza vaccines (IIV) and recombinant influenza vaccines (RIV). RIV is not approved for children younger than 18 years of age; those children should receive IIV.
- The nasal spray flu vaccine (trade name FluMist®) is not recommended again this season.
- Flu shots do work. A study using data from recent flu seasons found that flu vaccine reduced the risk of flu-associated death by half among children with high risk medical conditions and by nearly two-thirds among children without medical conditions.

### *Reasons to get your child a flu shot:*

- A flu shot can keep your child from getting sick with flu.
- Influenza is more serious than the common cold. It can lead to serious complications, including hospitalization or death.
  - » CDC estimates that since 2010, flu-related hospitalizations among children younger than 5 years have ranged from 7,000 to 26,000 in the United States.
  - » During the 2016-2017 flu season, there were more than 100 flu-related deaths in children reported to CDC.
- Children, especially school-aged children, are more likely to catch flu. Millions of children get sick with flu every season. A typical flu illness can mean missing a week or more of school. Once infected, children can spread flu to parents and siblings, other family members, and friends.
- Vaccinating your child protects people around them (like grandparents, babies or anyone with long-term health problems) who are more vulnerable to flu.
- Children with certain long-term health conditions (like asthma or diabetes) and all children younger than 5 years are at high risk of serious illness when they get flu.
- Flu vaccine is not perfect. Some vaccinated people may still get sick, but flu vaccine may make their illness milder.
- Flu vaccines have a good safety record. Hundreds of millions of people have safely gotten flu vaccines for more than 50 years. There may be mild side effects from getting vaccinated, but these are so much less of a problem than getting sick with flu!



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



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## *The single best way to protect children from flu is to get them vaccinated each year.*

Each year, flu vaccines protect against the most common flu viruses expected during the upcoming season. Traditional flu vaccines are made to protect against either 3 flu viruses (called “trivalent” vaccines) or 4 flu viruses (called “quadrivalent” vaccines). Quadrivalent vaccines protect against the same 3 viruses as the trivalent vaccine plus an extra B virus. There is no preference for one vaccine over another among the licensed and recommended flu vaccines this season.

### *Children 6 months through 8 years of age need either 1 or 2 doses of vaccine.*

- Children 6 months through 8 years who received at least 2 doses of any licensed trivalent or quadrivalent flu vaccine at any time before July 2017 will only need 1 dose this season.
- Children 6 months through 8 years getting vaccinated for the first time, or who have only previously received 1 dose of vaccine in the past, should get 2 doses this season.
  - » The first dose should be given as soon as vaccine is available to “prime” the immune system.
  - » The second dose should be given at least 28 days later to build more and longer lasting immune protection.
  - » Children who only get 1 dose, but need 2 doses, are likely to have less or possibly no protection from that single dose.



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For more information, visit:

**[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)**

or call **1-800-CDC-INFO**