

INFLUENZA:

Information for Schools on Influenza and Vaccines



Is flu vaccine recommended for children in schools?

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommend that all children 6 months of age and older receive flu vaccine every year to help them stay healthy.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** The flu vaccine is the **BEST** way to protect children and adults from getting the flu. It also protects against complications if you do get the flu.

How can students and staff be protected from the flu?

You can protect students and staff by getting your flu vaccine and encouraging others in contact with children to get vaccinated—parents, teachers, secretaries, and other support staff. The flu vaccine protects against the flu by creating antibodies that fight against different flu viruses.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** Every year, schools in Michigan close because too many students are out sick with the flu. Stop the spread by getting a flu vaccine!

What is influenza or “the flu”?

The flu is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs that is 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 even die.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

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

What kinds of flu vaccine can students get?

Both the flu shot and nasal spray flu vaccine will be available for school-aged children to get in the 2018-19 flu season. The nasal spray flu vaccine was shown to have increased effectiveness after one of the flu strains in it was changed.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** The decision to once again recommend FluMist® is an example of using science and data to help improve the public’s health.

How often should a flu vaccine be given?

Flu vaccines change from year to year, so children and adults need to get a flu vaccine every year to be protected. A healthcare provider can help determine if a child needs one or two doses of flu vaccine. The vaccine can be given as soon as it becomes available (as early as August).

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** It is safer to get the flu vaccine than it is to get the flu. Don’t underestimate the health risks from flu!