

# INFLUENZA: Information for Daycares on Influenza and Vaccines



Updated February 2020

## What is influenza or “the flu”?

The flu is a potentially-severe 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 is very contagious and spreads easily by coughing and sneezing. Millions of people get the flu every year. Many people get very sick, and some even die.

## What are the symptoms of the flu?

People who have the flu often get sick very quickly and can have symptoms that include 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.

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

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? 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 children and staff be protected from the flu?

Children and staff as well as others in contact with children—parents, teachers, siblings, and other support staff – should get a flu vaccine. 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.

➡ **DID YOU KNOW? To protect babies younger than 6 months from flu, women should get flu vaccine while they are pregnant.**

## What kinds of flu vaccine can children get?

Children 6 months and older can get the flu shot. But the nasal spray flu vaccine is another option for healthy children aged 2 years and older. Consult your child’s doctor to determine which flu vaccine is best for them.

➡ **DID YOU KNOW? Some children aged 6 months through 8 years need 2 doses of flu vaccine in one season to be fully protected.**

## Are flu vaccines safe?

Yes, flu vaccines are safe and can protect children from severe complications from influenza. Flu vaccines can be given along with other vaccines. It is safer to get a flu vaccine than it is to get the flu. Most children and adults have little or no problem after getting the flu vaccine.

➡ **DID YOU KNOW? Flu vaccines change from year to year, so everyone needs to get a new flu vaccine every season.**

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) makes recommendations for who should receive the flu vaccine each year. Visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) for more information. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) does not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, religion, color, height, weight, marital status, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs or disability.

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