

FLU SEASON IS HERE!



**See your doctor for your Annual
Flu Shot or Nasal Spray Vaccine!**



2006-2007 Influenza (Flu) Season Expanded Vaccination Recommendations

Expanded Vaccination Recommendations

Influenza vaccination is the primary method for preventing influenza and its severe complications. According to The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), annual influenza vaccination has been expanded and is now recommended for the following groups:

Persons at high risk for influenza-related complications and severe disease, including:

- children aged 6–59 months,
- pregnant women,
- persons aged ≥ 50 years,
- persons of any age with certain chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, immune system disorders and asthma
- children 6 months to 18 years old on chronic aspirin therapy
- residents of nursing homes or long-term care facilities

AND

Persons who are close contacts to persons at high risk, including:

- those who live with or care for persons at high risk for influenza-related complications; (see list above)
- household contacts and caregivers of children aged 0–59 months
- health-care workers.

These groups will be eligible to receive flu vaccine at local public health facilities or with your medical doctor. In general, anyone who wants to reduce his or her chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. (There are certain medical exceptions—check with your doctor). Those children 6 months to less than nine years of age receiving the flu shot for the first time ever, will need to obtain two flu vaccines at least four weeks apart. So it is a good item for them to be vaccinated now.

Nasal Spray Vaccine

Also, the nasal spray flu vaccine is always an option for healthy persons aged 5–49 years who are not pregnant. Again, the CHIP flu hotline and website are great sources of flu shot clinic information.

Never Too Late to Vaccinate

It's very important to remember that the flu season often lasts until March or later, so getting flu vaccine in November, December or even January or later is not too late! An ample supply of vaccine is expected this year. So get vaccinated and protect yourself and family, friends, and co-workers from the flu!

Other Preventive Measures

Besides getting a flu vaccine every year, health officials recommend:

1. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when coughing or sneezing;
2. Wash your hands often with soap and warm water (or use hand wash gels containing a minimum of 60% alcohol);
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
4. Get regular exercise, enough rest and eat healthy, balanced meals;
5. Stay away from people who are sick; and
6. Stay home when you are sick.

These actions can help protect you and those around you from diseases like the flu and colds all year long, not just during the flu season.

For more information about the flu and flu shots in general, please call the CDC Info Hotline at 1-800-232-4636 (English and Spanish). On the Internet, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>.

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