

School-Based Seasonal Influenza Clinics: Frequently Asked Questions

Do medical authorities recommend flu shots for school age children?

Yes. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends yearly flu vaccination for **ALL** children aged 6 months – 18 years. This recommendation should reduce the risk of flu among children, their need for doctors' visits, and missed time from school. Also, decreasing the spread of flu among children may reduce flu among their household members and within the community.

Why do persons need to get vaccinated against the flu every year?

Flu viruses change from year to year, so you can get the flu many times during your lifetime. The immunity you develop from having had the flu in the past does not protect you from new strains that come along from year to year. Also, last year's vaccine was made specifically to protect you from flu virus strains circulating a year ago, so it may not protect you against this year's strains. That is why the flu vaccine gets updated every year.

Should healthy school children be vaccinated against flu?

Yes. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends yearly flu vaccination for **ALL** children aged 6 months – 18 years.

Are students required to be vaccinated against flu?

No. Participation in the school-based program is voluntary and permission of the child's parent or guardian is required.

Who is eligible for the flu vaccine at school?

All students enrolled in the participating schools are eligible to receive the flu vaccine at school.

Who is eligible for FluMist (nasal)?

FluMist is for healthy children, adolescents and adults 2-49 years of age.

Who is not eligible for the FluMist and will require the shot?

Students with underlying health conditions such as: asthma, weakened immune systems, metabolic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, and pregnant women must receive the injectable formulation of the flu vaccine.

Can parents and younger or older children be vaccinated at the school?

No, only enrolled students are eligible. Parents, guardians, and older or younger children may receive their flu vaccine from their regular health care provider or clinic.

What if someone is absent when vaccinations are offered?

If a child misses a scheduled school flu vaccination clinic, his/her parent can call their child's regular health care provider to schedule a vaccination appointment. However, the only way to receive a flu vaccine through this program is at school.

Who will administer the vaccine?

Trained Central District Health Department nursing personnel will administer the flu vaccine.

Is there any cost for the influenza vaccine?

Yes. Due to funding constraints Central District Health Department is working with two separate funding sources this year: For children with Medicaid, no insurance, Native American, Alaskan Indian, or if you have insurance that does not cover vaccines, **there is an administration fee of \$14.34.** Central District Health Department will bill you directly.

For children with insurance, we will bill your insurance company \$35.00 (includes cost of vaccine and administration fee). Central District Health Department will bill you directly for any balance due that your insurance company did not pay.

How will I know my child received the vaccine?

Vaccinated children will receive a shot card to bring home. Students through age 8 may require a second dose of vaccine. The shot card will identify students needing a second dose.

Will there be a clinic for second doses?

Yes, clinics will be held approximately one month after the first dose; a notice will be sent to parents with the date and time of the second clinic.

Could my child still get the flu after being vaccinated?

You cannot get the flu from the flu shot. However, it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide full protection against flu virus infection. In the meantime, your child is still at risk for getting the flu. Also, the flu vaccine will not protect against flu virus strains not in the flu vaccine or other viruses that cause symptoms similar to the flu.

Can the flu vaccine produce any side effects?

Yes, but they are usually very minor. See enclosed Vaccine Information Statements for more for information.