

The Flu Vaccine

The best way to protect yourself, your family, and the children and people you work with from becoming sick with the flu is to get a flu vaccine every year.

Here are important things to remember about flu vaccines:

- All people should get a flu vaccine if they want to reduce the risk of getting sick with the flu.
- A new flu vaccine is needed every year, because the flu virus is always changing.
- Flu shots can't cause the flu (the flu viruses in the shot are dead). Two doses given at least one month apart are recommended for children six months to eight years who are receiving the flu shot for the first time.
- The FluMist™ is safe and approved for flu prevention (the flu viruses are live but weakened). Two doses given at least one month apart are recommended for children aged two to eight years who are receiving the flu shot for the first time. *This vaccine is **not** recommended for pregnant women or others with chronic health conditions.*
- It takes about two weeks after you get your flu shot to be protected from becoming sick with the flu.
- The flu shot does not give 100 percent protection against the flu, but it can keep you from getting seriously sick with the flu.
- If you have never had the flu, you still need to get a flu vaccine every year.

- Flu vaccine is very safe and is given to millions of people every year.
- Some people may be sore after receiving the flu shot for one or two days where they had the shot or have mild flu-like symptoms.

Health experts recommend that anyone who wishes to lower their risk of getting sick with the flu, get a flu vaccine. Getting a flu vaccine will protect you and the people around you including small children, seniors, and people who have weaker immune systems.

Health experts recommend the following groups get a flu vaccine.

These groups are

- children six months to four years of age (they are at higher risk)
- children aged six months up to their 19th birthday
- pregnant women
- people 50 years of age and older
- people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- people who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu

People who care for children (aged six months to five years of age), such as child care workers, should get a flu vaccine, too! Getting a flu vaccine will help protect you from getting sick with the flu. It will also help keep you from spreading flu to others, including the children at the center and their families.

For more information on the flu vaccine, go to www.publichealth.lacounty.gov.