

Parents Page

NOVEMBER 2018

CHILDREN AND FLU SHOTS

The best way to prevent flu is with a flu vaccine. CDC recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older get a seasonal flu vaccine each year by the end of October. However, as long as flu viruses are circulating, vaccination should continue throughout flu season, even in January or later. Keep in mind that vaccination is especially important for certain people who are high risk or who are in close contact with high risk persons. This includes children at high risk for developing complications from flu illness, and adults who are close contacts of those children.



Children younger than 5 years of age – especially those younger than 2 years old – are at high risk of serious flu-related complications. A flu vaccine offers the best defense against getting flu and spreading it to others. Getting vaccinated can reduce flu illnesses, doctor's visits, missed work and school days, and prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths in children. Information on this page summarizes vaccine recommendations for children. Visit this page to learn more about vaccine benefits.

INFLUENZA IS DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN

Flu illness is more dangerous than the common cold for children. Each year, millions of children get sick with seasonal flu; thousands of children are hospitalized and some children die from flu. Children commonly need medical care because of flu, especially children younger than 5 years old who become sick with flu.

- Complications from flu among children in this age group can include:
 - Pneumonia: an illness where the lungs get infected and inflamed
 - Dehydration: when a child's body loses too much water and salts, often because fluid losses are greater than from fluid intake)
 - Worsening of long-term medical problems like heart disease or asthma
 - Brain dysfunction such as encephalopathy
 - Sinus problems and ear infections
 - In rare cases, flu complications can lead to death.

SOME CHILDREN ARE AT ESPECIALLY HIGH RISK

Children at greatest risk of serious flu-related complications include the following:

1. Children younger than 6 months old
2. These children are too young to be vaccinated. The best way to protect them is to make sure people around them are vaccinated.
3. Children aged 6 months up to their 5th birthday
4. Since 2010, CDC estimates that flu-related hospitalizations among children younger than 5 years ranged from 7,000 to 26,000 in the United States. Even children in this age group who are otherwise healthy are at risk simply because of their age. Additionally, children 2 years of age up to their 5th birthday are more likely than healthy older children to be taken to a doctor, an urgent care center, or the emergency room because of flu. To protect their health, all children 6 months and older should be vaccinated against flu each year. Vaccinating young children, their families, and other caregivers can also help protect them from getting sick.
5. American Indian and Alaskan Native children
6. These children are more likely to have severe flu illness that results in hospitalization or death.
7. Children aged 6 months through 18 years with chronic health problems.

Flu shots are available same day appointment at the Strawberry Wilderness Community Clinic by calling 541 575-0404

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**Strawberry Wilderness
 Community Clinic**
 Zachary Bailey, M.D. Shawna Clark, DNP
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