

Vaccination is the Best Protection against Flu



Did you know influenza, commonly referred to as the flu, is more dangerous than the common cold for children? A flu vaccine offers the best defense against flu, and can also reduce the spread. Getting vaccinated also can reduce doctor's visits and missed work and school days.¹ Plus, getting a flu shot this year is particularly important as we protect against other viruses like COVID-19. While the flu vaccine will not prevent COVID-19, it will help reduce flu illnesses, hospitalizations, and even deaths, in addition to saving medical resources for those with COVID-19.

Remember, **all children between the ages of 6 months and 59 months of age must receive one dose of the flu vaccine between July 1 - December 31 each year**, in order to attend school, even if they are learning remotely. Every year there is a new strain of the virus, so the flu vaccine given must be specific to that strain. Read on to learn more about the flu, its symptoms, and how to prevent further spread of the virus.

What is Influenza?

Influenza is a virus. It is most common during the fall and winter months. Every year, children and families are hospitalized or die due to complications, which stem from the flu. The best way to protect your child from contracting the flu is to receive the influenza vaccine.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

The flu can present as:

- fever or chills,
- cough,
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
- fatigue,
- muscle or body aches,
- headache,
- sore throat,
- congestion or runny nose,
- nausea or vomiting, and
- diarrhea.



The flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses but may have similar symptoms. Stay home and consult your doctor for a diagnosis if your child or anyone in your household has these symptoms.

The flu spreads by the following:

- Close contact (within about 6th ft.) with a person who is infected.

¹ See more at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Flu & Young Children](#)



- Droplets sprayed when a person coughs, sneezes, sings, or talks.
- Touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

This is also how COVID-19 spreads. That is why it is very important to frequently wash your hands with soap and water, and disinfect surfaces frequently touched by people in high traffic areas to avoid transmission. Consider watching this video from the CDC with your child on [how to properly wash your hands](#).

Vaccines: Key to a healthy family

Vaccines work by preparing the body's immune system for future exposure to viruses or bacteria. After your child receives the vaccine, if the virus or bacteria that causes the real disease enters the body, their immune system responds quickly to attack the disease and prevent your child from getting sick.²

Even if your child had all their required vaccines last year, you should check if they need additional vaccines this year. If you need a referral for your child to receive the influenza vaccine or other immunizations, speak with your child's program. They can use their partnerships with community hospitals or clinics to provide support.

Children are no longer exempt from vaccination requirements due to religious beliefs. The only children who do not require vaccination are those with medical exemptions.

We want all children to continue to attend a program in a healthy and safe environment where they thrive socially, and emotionally and are ready to learn. Help us keep our programs safe by getting your child fully immunized today!

Additional Resources

- NYC Department of Health [Parents Fight Flu fact sheets](#) in English and in [Spanish](#)
- [Is It Flu or COVID-19?](#) (PDF)
Other Languages: [Русский](#) | [Kreyòl ayisyen](#) | [한국어](#) | [□□□□□](#) | [Italiano](#) | [Polski](#) | [العربية](#) | [Français](#) | [יידיש](#) | [اردو](#)
- [What New Yorkers Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines](#) (PDF)
Other Languages: [Español](#) | [Русский](#) | [繁體中文](#) | [简体中文](#) | [Kreyòl ayisyen](#) | [한국어](#) | [□□□□□](#) | [Italiano](#) | [Polski](#) | [العربية](#) | [Français](#) | [יידיש](#) | [اردو](#)
- [Flyer: Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (PDF)
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- [NYC H+H Childhood Vaccines Save Lives](#)
- [Harvard's Health Literacy Project COVID-19 Fact Sheets](#) in multiple languages

² See more at U.S. Food & Drug Administration: [Vaccines for Children - A Guide for Parents and Caregivers](#)

