



## Flu Vaccines in Children and Your Child's School Flu Clinic

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

#### ? *Why do children need an annual flu vaccine?*

Influenza illness (the flu) is far more dangerous than the common cold. Flu vaccines are safe, effective, and the best way to protect your child from becoming severely ill. They decrease doctor's visits, keep kids in school, and reduce the risk of pneumonia and other complications. Flu vaccines also help protect other vulnerable family members from catching the flu.

#### ? *Who should get an annual flu vaccine?*

CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a yearly, seasonal flu vaccine. Since the specific strain of flu that is around each year changes, the vaccine is updated each year to protect against the four influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common that year.

If it is your child's first time getting a flu vaccine, and they are under 9 years old, they should get two doses of influenza vaccine at least four weeks apart. Anyone who has received a prior flu vaccine only needs one annual dose.

#### ? *Is there anyone who should not get the flu vaccine? I heard that children with an egg allergy should not get it.*

Children younger than 6 months of age are not eligible for a flu vaccine. Anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction to a dose of influenza vaccine should not receive a second vaccine. In the past, anyone with an egg allergy was instructed not to receive a flu vaccine. However, the amount of egg protein in the vaccine is so small that it is now recommended and safe for egg allergic people.

#### ? *Is the flu vaccine safe? What are possible side effects?*

The vaccine is very safe. Millions of children get the vaccine each year. Although many people think you can get the flu illness from the vaccine, this is not true. However, you may have side effects that are far less severe than the flu illness.

Side effects from the flu vaccine are generally very mild. Some people may feel achy or have a mild fever and/or fatigue for 1-2 days after vaccination. As with all shots, the injection site may be sore, red, and swollen for a few days. Also, as with any vaccine, very few children may faint briefly a few minutes after receiving the vaccine. Lastly, and very rarely, a person may experience an allergic reaction.

**? *Who is eligible to receive a flu vaccine at the school vaccine clinic?***

Anyone who is over 6 months of age, including students, siblings, parents, and staff may receive the vaccine.

**? *What is Zest Pediatric Network?***

Zest Pediatric Network is the first direct pediatric care physician network in the country, with a goal of bringing a personal touch back to medicine. Each of our locations is a concierge-style membership practice designed by parent pediatricians for parents that prioritizes access, communication, and relationships. From home visits to texting your pediatrician, Zest brings relationships back to medicine. Before embarking on this bold and innovative pediatric model, each of the Zest pediatricians previously worked at one of the region's children's hospitals.

**? *Why is Zest Pediatric Network offering flu vaccines at my child's school?***

Zest believes that the clinical and education communities need to be more integrated – after all, many children spend much their waking hours in school. Our efforts include collaborating on clinical issues, parenting education, and assuring children are as healthy as possible allowing them to remain in school and their parents at work. On-site flu vaccination aligns with our goals and the added convenience for parents and children is simply the right thing to do.

**? *Which flu vaccine will be available at the school clinic?***

The flu vaccine will be a quadrivalent vaccine that contains no egg protein, antibiotics, or preservatives. We will not be offering the nasal flu vaccine as not all children are able to receive it.

**? *Is there a charge for the flu vaccine?***

Insurance information is required for vaccine registration. Your insurance company will be billed and there will be no cost to you (same as with receiving the vaccine in a drug store or doctor's office).

**? *How do I sign-up my family to receive the flu vaccine at school?***

Each school will have a unique link to be used for registration. Each person receiving a vaccine will need to register separately. Registration is best done on a computer rather than over a cell phone.

**Learn more about flu vaccines...**

[CDC.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu)

<https://www.immunize.org/influenza/>

[HealthChildren.org/flu](https://www.healthchildren.org/flu)

**Learn more about Zest Pediatric Network...**

[ZestPeds.com](https://www.zestpeds.com)

