



## 2017-2018 Flu Information

### **What is influenza?**

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness. It is not the same thing as the stomach flu or a vomiting and diarrhea illness.

### **How serious is it to get influenza?**

Influenza can be very dangerous for children. Each year about 20,000 children are hospitalized from flu complications. Approximately 100 pediatric deaths occur yearly from Influenza, nearly half of whom were previously healthy. Flu illness can vary from mild to severe. It is especially dangerous for children who have certain long-term health conditions.

### **Does my child need a flu shot?**

To protect against influenza, the first and most important thing you can do is to get a flu vaccine for yourself and your child. A 2014 study showed that having a flu vaccine reduced children's risk of flu-related intensive care admission by 74%. Flu vaccine is updated annually to protect against the flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to cause illness during the upcoming flu season.

### **Is the flu vaccine safe?**

Flu vaccines are among the safest medical products in use. Hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines. Flu vaccines are made using strict safety and production measures. There is no thimerosal preservative in any of our flu vaccines.

### **Is it possible to get the flu from the vaccine itself?**

No, a flu vaccine cannot cause flu illness. Flu vaccines are made with 'inactivated' virus and therefore are not infectious.

### **Is it too early in the season to get my flu shot?**

It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against influenza virus infection. That's why it's better to get vaccinated early in the fall, before the flu season really gets under way and it will last throughout the whole influenza season.



### Influenza Vaccine Screening Checklist

1. Has the person to be vaccinated ever had a serious reaction to the influenza vaccine?  No  Yes
  
2. Has the person to be vaccinated ever had Guillain-Barre syndrome (a severe paralyzing illness)?  No  Yes
  
3. For children 6 months through 8 years, did the child receive at least 2 doses of influenza vaccine before July 1, 2016 or is this the 2nd dose this season?  No  Yes
  
4. Is the person to be vaccinated significantly ill today?  No  Yes
  
5. Has the person to be vaccinated ever had a serious reaction to eggs (facial, airway and/or mouth swelling, respiratory distress, lightheadedness, recurrent vomiting, or a reaction that required use of epinephrine)?  No  Yes