

**For child care providers to share with parents/caregivers:**

It's flu season, and thousands of children younger than age five are hospitalized every year with [flu complications](#), and while it is rare, some children die from flu. The single best way to protect your entire family is for all people aged six months and older to get an influenza vaccine each year.

A recent study published in the medical journal [Pediatrics](#) is the first of its kind to show that flu vaccination significantly reduced a child's risk of dying from the illness. The study looked at data from four flu seasons between 2010 and 2014, and found that flu vaccination reduced the risk of flu-associated death by nearly two-thirds (65 percent) among healthy children, and by half (51 percent) among children with [underlying high-risk medical conditions](#).

It is especially important for household contacts and caregivers of those with a higher risk for flu-related complications (children <5 years and adults ≥ 50 years) to be vaccinated. In addition, you can encourage the following precautions to help stop the spread of germs:

- **Keep kids home when they're sick.** And try to avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away after use and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve, not your hands.
- **Wash your hands with soap and water often**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.

Children and adults should be vaccinated in the Fall, preferably by the end of October because it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body that protect against flu. Both children and adults can get vaccinated at their health care providers' office. Adults can also be vaccinated at public clinics ([check the schedule](#) for a clinic near you) or at pharmacies around the state.