

Questions: Who should get the flu-shot?

Answer: **Influenza (“flu”)** is a contagious disease, caused by the influenza virus, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or nasal secretions. Anyone can get influenza, but rates of infection are highest among children. It can cause fever, sore throat, chills, fatigue, cough, headache, muscle aches. Influenza can lead to pneumonia and can be dangerous for people with heart or lung diseases. It can cause high fever, diarrhea and seizures in children. On average, 226,000 people are hospitalized every year because of influenza and 36,000 die – mostly elderly. Influenza vaccine can prevent influenza.

The vaccine is recommended to all children from 6 months through 18 years of age and anyone 50 years of age or older. In addition, people with a chronic medical condition or weakened immune system, women who will be pregnant during influenza season, nursing homes residents and of course all health care providers should be vaccinated.

Plan to get influenza vaccine in October or November if you can. But getting vaccinated in December, or even later, will still be beneficial in most years. Influenza can occur any time from November through May, but it most often peaks in January or February. People with a severe egg allergy should not get the vaccine.

For further questions contact us 615-225-1990.

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