

Dear Parents:

Flu season is approaching and now is the time to protect you and your family from this seasonal communicable disease. Having your child vaccinated provides the greatest protection against the flu.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends flu vaccine for **all** children 6 months and older but the flu vaccine is particularly important for children up to age five, children with chronic medical conditions, children of American Indian/Alaskan Native heritage, healthcare providers, childcare workers, pregnant women, those who have recently delivered and those mothers who are breastfeeding. Because flu can spread rapidly through the community, the CDC recommends you schedule your child's flu vaccine appointment now.

Children 6 months thru 9 years, who have never had flu vaccine before, require a two-dose regimen, scheduled at least 4 weeks apart, with immunity developing approximately two weeks after the second dose. Again, scheduling your child's appointment now is highly recommended.

While COVID-19 has not affected children as severely as adults, the Delta variant has been more contagious than other strains, and the number of children being infected with COVID-19 is higher than previously noted. There is also a risk of experiencing both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. For this reason, we recommend that your child (12 years of age and older), receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This further protects your child.

For your convenience, we can schedule a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as the flu vaccine. According to the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control, a COVID-19 vaccine can be safely given during the same visit. Your child's healthcare provider will be able to discuss any concerns you may have about the safety and timing of these vaccines. You may also have the two vaccines administered at different times.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/flu.html>

Thank you for your continued trust in us.