

## **What should you do if you get the flu?**

If you have the flu (or a temperature of 100°F or higher):

- Stay home, get rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing
- Wash your hands frequently.

If symptoms get worse, seek medical attention. Parents should contact their health-care provider immediately if they have any concerns about their child's recovery. This would include a child having problems breathing, being too sleepy, or not taking enough fluids.

**DO NOT** give aspirin to children for treatment of flu symptoms because of the risk of Reye's syndrome, an acute and potentially life-threatening condition that results when children take aspirin or aspirin-containing products during certain viral illnesses.

## **Who should get vaccinated?**

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends an annual influenza vaccine for all people aged 6 months and older. Children with chronic health problems like asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system are at especially high risk of developing serious flu complications. Please see the ACIP Recommendations for Influenza at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/flu.html>

Children aged 6 months through 8 years require 2 doses of the influenza vaccine during their first season of vaccination. The 2 doses should be administered a minimum of 4 weeks apart. Doing this provides the most effective protection against the flu.

The flu vaccine is not approved for use in children younger than 6 months old. Children younger than 6 months old can also get very sick from the flu, but they are too young to get a flu vaccine. The best way to protect young children is to make sure that their household members and their caregivers are vaccinated.

All pregnant women should be vaccinated to protect their baby from the flu.

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

The flu vaccine is safe and effective. The risk of the flu vaccine causing serious harm or death is extremely small. Vaccines are continually monitored for safety, and like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects.

Vaccines may rarely cause serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions. Almost all people who receive an influenza vaccine have no serious problems from it.

## **What are the side effects that could occur?**

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given
- Low-grade fever

## **Where can you get more information?**

Call your doctor, nurse, local health department, visit [www.TexasFlu.org](http://www.TexasFlu.org) or call the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch customer service line at (800) 252-9152 for more information.