

# INFLUENZA:

## Information for Schools on Influenza and Vaccines



### Is flu vaccine recommended for children in schools?

Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommend that all children 6 months of age and older receive flu vaccine every year to help them stay healthy.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** The flu vaccine is the best defense against the flu and the best way to protect children and adults from getting the flu.

### How can students and staff be protected from the flu?

You can protect students and staff by getting a flu vaccine and encouraging others in contact with children to get vaccinated—parents, teachers, secretaries, and other support staff. The flu vaccine protects against the flu by creating antibodies that fight against the flu virus.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** Every year there are Michigan schools that close because too many students are absent with the flu. Stop the spread by getting a flu vaccine!

### What is influenza or “the flu”?

The flu is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs that is caused by flu viruses. There are many different flu viruses that can make people sick. The flu spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. Many people get the flu every year. Some people can get very sick, and some even die.

### What are the symptoms of the flu?

People who have the flu often get sick very fast with a high fever, headache, muscle aches, dry cough, and sore throat. Some people who have the flu have NO symptoms at all, but they can still spread the flu to others.

### What kinds of flu vaccine can students get?

School-aged children can get the flu shot. The nasal spray flu vaccine was not recommended for the 2016-2017 flu season because it did not do a good job of protecting against the flu in previous seasons, in comparison to the flu shot.

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** The decision to no longer use FluMist® is an example of using science to help improve the public’s health.

### How often should a flu vaccine be given?

Flu vaccines change from year to year, so children and adults need to get a flu vaccine every year. Some children may need two doses, which a healthcare provider can help determine. The vaccine can be given as soon as it becomes available (as early as August).

➤ **DID YOU KNOW?** It is safer to get the flu vaccine than it is to get the flu. Don’t underestimate the health risks from flu.