

Flu Vaccines – Protection for your children and you

The flu, or influenza, is a very serious respiratory illness caused by viruses. People with asthma, diabetes or other health problems can get sick enough to go to the hospital. They can get serious complications. Over 200,000 people are sick enough to be in the hospital every year and over 36,000 die from the flu. Everybody over 6 months old should get a flu vaccine this year to protect ourselves and our families, friends, and neighbors.

There are 2 kinds of flu vaccine: the shot in the arm and a spray that goes in the nose. Only healthy people ages 2 years to 49 years can get the flu vaccine in their noses. It is *very important* that anyone in this list get a flu shot starting now:

- pregnant women
- those who take care of a baby less than 6 months old
- children or adults with asthma, diabetes, sickle cell anemia, liver disease, weak immune systems, or heart problems
- people living in a nursing home or long term care facility
- everybody over 50 years old

It takes up to 2 weeks for the vaccine to fully protect you. The protection from the flu will last for 1 year. You and your child must be healthy to get a flu vaccine (no fever or bad colds).

Both flu vaccines will be available free for the students at your school through Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools-Lamar Clinic. If you would like your school-age child or teen to get the flu vaccine this year or if you have questions, please call us at (281) 762-8383. Services are always free of charge and Medicaid is now accepted.

Websites for more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Key facts about influenza vaccine

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>

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281-762-8383 (Open Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)*