Influenza Disease

**What is influenza disease?**

* Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus. The virus infects the nose, throat, and lungs.
* It can cause mild to severe illness, hospitalization, and even death.

**What are the symptoms?**

* Anyone can get flu and it strikes suddenly and can last several days. Symptoms of flu disease may include:

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| * Fever or feeling feverish/chills o Cough
* Sore throat o Runny or stuffy nose
 | * Muscle or body aches
* Headaches
* Fatigue (very tired) o Vomiting and diarrhea
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**How does influenza disease spread?**

* Flu is spread by: o an infected person’s droplets from cough, sneeze or talk enter the mouth, eye or nose.

o Touching a surface or object with flu virus on it and then touching mouth, eyes or nose.

* An infected person can infect others 1 day before symptoms start and up to 5 to 7 days after symptoms start.
* Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.

**How do I prevent the flu?**

* Get a yearly flu vaccine.
* Wash your hands properly and often.
* Cover your cough and sneeze with arm.
* Clean and sterilize surfaces.
* Stay home if you are sick.

**Where can I find more information?**

* Ask your doctor.
* Call the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at 1800-469-4599.
* Go to cdc.gov and type influenza in the SEARCH box.



Alabama Department of Public Health

Immunization Division, 201 Monroe St, Montgomery, AL 36104 1-800-469-4599 [www.adph.org/imm](http://www.adph.org/imm)  2/29/16

# Influenza Vaccine

 **Who should get the influenza (flu) vaccine?**

* The flu vaccine is recommended every year for everyone age 6 months or older.

**Who should be vaccinated against influenza because they are at increased risk?**  Children 6 months of age through 5 years Adults 65 years of age or older

* Pregnant women
* Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities People who have medical conditions including the following:
	+ Asthmao Weakened immune systems
	+ Chronic lung diseasedue to disease or medication of Heart disease(such as HIV/AIDS or cancer)o Blood disorders (such as sickle cell o People younger than 19 years’ disease)of age who are receiving long-
	+ Kidney disorders term aspirin therapy
	+ Liver disorderso People with extreme obesity

**What are the common vaccine side effects and risks?**

* Flu vaccines are safe, but some side effects can occur.
* Minor problems following the flu vaccine include soreness, redness, and/or swelling from the shot, hoarseness, sore, red or itchy eyes, cough, fever, aches, headache, itching, and fatigue.
* More serious problems may include Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) in fewer than 1 or 2 cases per one million people vaccinated, children receiving multiple vaccines slightly increase in fever with seizure.
* People who should not get the flu vaccine include anyone with severe, life threatening allergies, had GBS before, or not feeling well the day of vaccination.

**Where can I find more information?**

* Ask your doctor.
* Ask you school nurse.
* Call the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at 1800-469-4599.
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