

## Talking Points for Parents

- Right after kids go back to school is a good time to talk to your child's doctor about when you can get your child's flu vaccination because flu season usually starts sometime in the fall and peaks somewhere between January and March.
- A flu vaccine at the beginning of the school year will help prevent the flu throughout the school year.
- Having your child vaccinated makes it harder for the flu to spread, which helps protect other children too — including those with higher risk from medical conditions.
- The flu vaccine is important for kids because they have a higher risk of complications or other illnesses linked to the flu than most adults.
- Kids with chronic medical conditions — like asthma — are at an even higher risk than healthier children are.
- Signs of the flu typically include: fever or feeling feverish, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and feeling very tired. Some people may also throw up or have diarrhea. This is more common for kids than for adults.
- Parents can also help keep their kids healthy and prevent the spread of flu this flu season by having kids:
  - Wash their hands often or use alcohol rubs when soap isn't available.
  - Stay home from school when they are sick.
  - Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue or their elbow when they cough or sneeze.
  - Avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Parents and teachers should disinfect surfaces that may have flu germs. Kids and school staff should stay home if they are sick.
- Most kids will get over the flu in a couple of weeks without needing to see a doctor. Flu can be serious in children though, and parents and teachers should know emergency signs of flu in children:
  - Fast or difficult breathing
  - Bluish colored skin
  - Fever with rash
  - Child is irritable and does not want to be held
  - Not drinking fluids

- Will not wake up or interact
- Has signs of flu that get better but returns with fever and a worse cough
- Adults get the flu too!
  - If you are scheduling your kid's vaccine, you might as well schedule yours also.
  - Teachers, protect yourself and your students — make it part of your own back to school routine.