Flu Vaccine Recommendations For Your Child

In a perfect world, no child would ever get the flu (influenza). But each season, the flu is a common reason for both sick visits to the doctor and hospitalizations for children ages 5 and younger. Since you can’t keep them home from school until the flu season ends, your best option for helping protect your child is a flu vaccine.\textsuperscript{1-3}

If it’s their first flu vaccine, your child may get 2 doses

Children 6 months through 8 years old who are getting their first flu vaccine may need to get a second dose 1 month later.\textsuperscript{2}

Studies have shown that children who get 2 flu doses during their first flu season are better protected than those who only get one flu dose.\textsuperscript{1} This is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children — 6 months through 8 years — who are getting their first flu vaccine, get 2 doses.\textsuperscript{1}

What if your child is 9 years or older?

Children 9 years or older typically only get 1 flu vaccine annually.\textsuperscript{4} Talk to your health care provider to determine if 2 doses are necessary for your child.

See the dosing chart below for recommended annual flu vaccine schedules.\textsuperscript{4}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 months to 8 years</td>
<td>1-2 flu doses ≥ 4 weeks apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 9 Years</td>
<td>1 vaccine annually</td>
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Talk with your health care provider about the correct vaccine for you or your child, and to schedule your child’s vaccination.

Flu Fact

Did you know that in the US, only 57% of children under 18 years of age got a flu vaccine during the 2011–2012 flu season?\textsuperscript{5}

- 13–17 years of age only 34%
- 5–12 years of age only 54%
- 6 months–4 years of age only 68%
References


2. CDC. ACIP Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Aged 0 through 18 years and Adults Aged 19 Years and Older—United States, 2013. MMWR. 2013;62:1-21.

