

# FACT SHEET

# INFLUENZA

## Recommendations for Child Care Facilities

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**Influenza (“the flu”) is a respiratory disease that spreads easily. It is characterized by the sudden onset of fever, body aches, sore throat, headache and cough, and, in children, can also cause diarrhea and vomiting.**

- Any staff or child suspected of having the flu should not attend child care.
- Wash hands frequently using soap, friction and warm running water for 15 seconds (this is generally around the time it takes to sing the ABC’s). Dry hands with paper towels or automatic hand dryers. Young children should be instructed and assisted to ensure proper hand washing. Restrooms should be checked regularly to ensure that soap and towels are available.
- Proper hand washing is particularly important after wiping your or someone else’s nose, or after contact with saliva or nose drainage.
- Flu can be spread from coughs or sneezes. Make sure tissues are available for runny noses and sneezing. Staff and children should cover their mouths when coughing and use a tissue when sneezing or blowing their noses. Tissues should be thrown away immediately, and then hands should be washed. (If you cannot wash hands, cleanse hands with a hand gel that contains alcohol.) Make sure tissues are available in the day-care center and cars for runny noses and sneezing.
- Staff and children (especially those with medical conditions and children between 6 and 23 months of age) and anyone who wants to lower their risk of getting the flu should get the flu shot. It is never too late in the flu season to get the flu shot.
- Closing a child care in the event of an outbreak is usually not recommended.
- All children and staff should avoid sharing glasses, forks, spoons, toothbrushes, and toys.
- In the child care, frequently clean commonly used surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, eating surfaces, toys, etc. Commercial disinfectants or a bleach solution mixed daily (mix ¼ cup bleach with 1 gallon of water) should be used.

**Who should get the flu shot:** (for more information contact your healthcare provider or local health department)

### Staff

- Persons 50 years old or older
- Women who will be in the second or third trimester of pregnancy during the influenza season

### Children

- Children between 6 and 23 months old and their siblings up to 18 years old, or any other high risk household members.
- Anyone older than 6 months old who requires regular medical follow-up or who was hospitalized during the preceding year because of diseases like diabetes, cancer, chronic renal, heart or lung disease, etc.
- Anyone between 6 months to 18 years old receiving long-term aspirin therapy because of the risk of developing Reye’s syndrome following a viral illness.

### Everyone

- Household members (including children) of persons in high-risk groups
- Any person who does not want to get the flu