

Mayo Clinic Minute: Why it's important for kids to be vaccinated for flu

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Flu season typically starts in the U.S. in November, December. That's why it's important to get your flu shot now. Mayo Clinic health experts say it's the best tool for preventing the flu. And kids of almost every age are eligible.

Winter is coming. And health experts at Mayo Clinic say so is the flu.

"We worry that in winter when more people are indoors again, flu will be worse than usual if we don't get enough people vaccinated," says Dr. Priya Sampathkumar, a Mayo Clinic infectious diseases specialist.

And that includes children.

"Unlike COVID, where you don't get very much of a clinical illness with COVID-19 and [young children](#), flu is the opposite. It actually causes more [severe illness](#) in young children, especially children under the age of 5," says Dr. Sampathkumar.

Kids over 6 months can get a [flu shot](#). And some children under 9 require two doses.

"Children under the age of 9 need two doses if this is the first time they're being vaccinated against flu. The two doses need to be separated by four weeks. So allow yourself enough time to get your child protected against influenza," says Dr. Sampathkumar.

And if getting a shot frightens your child, the nasal spray flu vaccine is always an option.

"Kids can get the FluMist. And it's a nice, easy way to get them protected if they're afraid of needles," she says.

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