



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE STATE EPIDEMIOLOGIST

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JON S. CORZINE
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FRED M. JACOBS, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS) is pleased to announce the launch of the 2007-2008 influenza (flu) immunization campaign. This comprehensive vaccination campaign is an effort to raise awareness of influenza and to protect New Jersey's children through influenza vaccination. The flu is not just a "bad cold." It is a serious disease that causes 36,000 deaths nationwide each year.

Flu vaccinations are no longer just for senior citizens. Very young children are also at great risk of serious illness from the flu that may result in hospitalization. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) are recommending influenza vaccination for healthy children age 6 months up through their 5th birthday, their household contacts and out-of-home caregivers. In addition, CDC recommends flu vaccine for any child 6 months to 18 years of age that has chronic health conditions.

Children getting the flu shot for the first time this year will need two doses of vaccine, separated by either 4 or 6 weeks, depending on the vaccine provided. In addition if your child was vaccinated for the first time last year, and they only received one dose they will need to receive two doses of flu vaccine this year. In subsequent years they will only need a single dose. Because of these recommendations, many children, their family members, and out of home caregivers will be vaccinated during this year's flu season. Contact your health care provider early to set up an appointment to get your child and/or yourself vaccinated.

As part of this campaign, educational materials for parents are available at the NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service website at www.nj.gov/flu. Information on how to find flu shot clinics in your area is also available at this website.

Join us in our efforts to reduce the impact that the flu has on New Jersey's children. Make vaccination a family affair.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eddy A. Bresnitz".

Eddy Bresnitz, M.D., M.S.
Deputy Commissioner/State Epidemiologist
Public Health Services