



Cowlitz County Health Department
1952 9th Ave
Longview, Wa 98632

National Influenza Vaccination Week December 8–14, 2008

Starting this year, annual flu shots are recommended for **all children 6 months through 18 years**, not just for younger children.

“All kids now have the opportunity to be protected against this serious, preventable disease,” said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. “I encourage everyone to take advantage of the good supply of flu vaccine this year and get vaccinated to protect families and communities.”



During the holiday season, people often spend more time with family, friends, and in *crowded places*, like shopping malls and airports. Diseases like flu can *spread more easily* in gatherings like these, or in schools and child care centers.

“If children pick up the flu at school, they can also spread it to their families,” said State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes. “This can be *especially dangerous* if there are babies or older adults in the home.”

Protecting children against the flu is important — even for healthy children. Last year, **two children died** from the flu in Washington and **86 children died** in the U.S. The flu spreads easily, especially in places where children are with other kids every day. Even a *mild* case of the flu can keep kids out of school and parents out of work for several days.

Young children and adults 65 years and older are at higher risk of hospitalization and even death from the flu. It’s *especially important* for families with babies less than 6 months old to get vaccinated so they don’t spread the flu to these babies who are too young to get a flu shot.

Getting vaccinated is the **best protection** against this disease. Don’t take risks with the flu this year. Keep yourself and your family healthy by getting your flu vaccine. Also practice good health manners by **covering your cough or sneeze** and **washing your hands often**.



People are urged to use their regular health care providers for immunizations. For help finding an immunization clinic, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588, or your local health agency, **Cowlitz County Health Department at 360-414-5593**. Adults can also check the American Lung Association Flu Shot Locator (<http://flucliniclocator.org>).

The Department of Health Flu News Web site provides additional information on flu vaccine (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/FluNews/>).

