



Arkansas House Newsletter

October 5, 2012

Legislation Increases Flu Vaccine Program in Arkansas Schools

Legislation passed in 2009 is helping to vaccinate more Arkansas children from the influenza virus. The 87th General Assembly passed an increase in the tobacco tax to fund a state wide trauma system. The increase also made it possible for the Arkansas Department of Health to expand its flu vaccine program in Arkansas schools.

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), the Arkansas Department of Education and local school districts statewide are again offering the seasonal flu vaccine to school children in grades K-12 beginning the week of October 8. School clinics will be going on for the next several months.

Seasonal flu vaccine is not required for children to attend school, but it is highly recommended. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend everyone aged six months and older receive a seasonal flu vaccine every year. Seasonal flu causes children to miss school and their parents to miss work. If you have insurance, the ADH will ask your insurance company to pay for the cost of giving the vaccine. If you do not have insurance or your insurance company does not pay, the shot will be no charge to you.

Both the nasal mist form and the injectable form of the flu vaccine will be available to children at school clinics this year. The injectable form of vaccine will be given to children who are unable to take the mist form. Children who are unable to take the mist form are those: less than two years of age; who have asthma; who have an underlying health condition or other conditions that prevent them from having the nasal form.

For more information go to www.healthy.arkansas.gov or <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>.

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