



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CDC Expands Recommendations for Flu Vaccine

For the first time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending that ALL children 6 months to 18 years old get a flu shot this year. That's a change from previous years, when the CDC guidelines emphasized vaccinating children 5 and older only if they had other health problems that put them at higher risk for serious complications if they got the flu.

But why is this important? Because children are two to three times more likely to get the flu than adults, and more likely to spread it to others. "Expanding the number of people receiving flu shots is the best way to protect the most vulnerable people in our community," said Paula Coleman, pediatric nurse practitioner at Livingston HealthCare. "The CDC focus on young children reflects that they are both high risk to be hospitalized with influenza as well as the most likely to spread infection."

Every year more than 200,000 people in the US will be hospitalized from influenza and 36,000 will die from the disease. The best way to prevent the "flu" is vaccination. The "flu" vaccine is designed to reduce the spread of the newest strain of influenza. It is 80% effective in preventing disease and is recommended in October/November because it stimulates the immune system to make antibodies against the virus.

Flu vaccines are recommended for everyone in your family, but especially all children, all adults over age 55, people with chronic medical diseases such as asthma, pregnant women, people working in healthcare or daycare and educators of children.

Livingston HealthCare will offer four walk-in flu shot clinics this year.

- Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 – 8:00 pm, Park Clinic West Crawford
- Saturday, October 25, 7:00 - 11:00 am, Park Clinic West Crawford
- Saturday, November 8, 7:00 am - 1:00 pm, Fall Health Festival, Park County Fairgrounds
- Wednesday, November 12, 5:30 – 8:00 pm, Park Clinic West Crawford

If you are unable to attend one of the clinics, you can make an appointment with your healthcare provider. Flu shots are \$20.00, and the fee must be paid at the time of service unless you have Medicare or Medicaid.

“You can do something to reduce you and your family’s chances of getting sick this winter,” says Peggy O’Hara, M.D., pediatrician at Livingston HealthCare. “It is important to be informed, talk to your doctor, discuss options for the whole family and vaccinate against the influenza virus.”