



2010-2011 Flu Vaccine Clinic Begins

9/8/10

Flu Season is right around the corner! Once again, Senders Pediatrics will be hosting a series of Flu Clinics to keep you healthy throughout the season. We've begun scheduling with our first clinic starting September 11th from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Please call today to schedule your vaccination.

2010-2011 Influenza Vaccine Recommendations

It seems like just yesterday that we were communicating every few weeks about the H1N1 influenza pandemic of 2009. Now that the World Health Organization has confirmed that the pandemic is officially over, it is time to begin planning for this year's influenza season. The first piece of good news is that there was no seasonal flu season in 2010. The other piece of good news is that nationally, as well as locally in Cleveland, illness of all types and specifically respiratory illness, is down considerably during the 2010 calendar year. Senders Pediatrics has seen a drop of close to 15% in illness compared to 2009. This downward trend which began in January 2010 is continuing to this day. In discussions with national infectious disease experts, the likely cause for this drop in illness is due to a boost in immunity that began with the broad exposure to the H1N1 influenza virus and the increase in influenza vaccine administration. In our practice alone, we almost tripled the total number of influenza vaccines in 2009 compared to the previous year. The hope is by duplicating this huge influenza vaccine distribution, we will continue to reduce the number of ill children and adults during the upcoming winter season.

So what's the plan? Each year, the flu vaccine is composed of three strains based on national experience with the disease from the previous year. This past February, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made the decision to include two strains of Influenza A and one strain of Influenza B. Included is a variation of the H1N1 strain that was responsible for the increase in illness last year as well as the H3N2 strain which has been responsible for illness in previous years.

Drift and shift: Each year, influenza disease drifts slightly. Although the strain is the same, the makeup of the virus has changed enough so that the protection that came from contracting the disease or from the vaccine given in previous years no longer helps. This is why influenza vaccine with the same strains is necessary year after year. Every once in a while the actual strain changes (shifts). This is what happened last year with H1N1 and why it was potentially so dangerous. In H1N1's case, no one had immune protection and we were all fortunate that it was as mild as it turned out to be. Looming on the horizon is H5N1, the "so-called" bird flu, that made a brief appearance in Asia a few years ago and could represent the next big strain shift. We are excited that we have been chosen to be one of the only North American sites to study a vaccine against bird flu, a study that will take place in early 2011.

2010-2011 Recommendations: It is important for children to be protected against both H1N1 and seasonal flu. Therefore,

- Children between 6 months and 9 years who did not receive any doses of H1N1 vaccine last year should receive 2 doses of this year's vaccine given 1 month apart. If one dose was given last year, they would still benefit from 2 doses this year.
- Children between 6 months and 9 years who have never received seasonal flu vaccine should receive 2 doses of this year's vaccine given 1 month apart. Again, if one dose was given last year for the first time, they would still benefit from 2 doses this year.
- Children between 6 months and 9 years who have received seasonal flu vaccine in the past and have had at least one year in which they received 2 doses should receive only 1 dose this year.
- Children ages 9 and above should receive only 1 dose of this year's vaccine
- Children under 6 months should not be vaccinated. Once they reach 6 months of age, they can be vaccinated through April of 2011.

Recap: As in the past, we will be offering flu vaccine in a flu clinic program every Saturday and alternating Sunday mornings from 9:00-12:00 noon and from 8:30-5:00pm on Wednesdays. We have plenty of vaccine available and can accommodate your child as early as this weekend (September 11-12). Please do not wait until later in the season. Remember that children with chronic illnesses such as asthma, sickle cell, diabetes and complex cardiac disease as well as premies and former premies are at a higher risk for developing serious complications from influenza. Such patients should be vaccinated as soon as possible.

As in previous seasons, we will have both the injected form of flu vaccine and the Flumist form that is squirted in the nose. Both are equally effective. However, Flumist is not approved for use in children under 2-years of age as well as children with asthma or reactive airway disease. Please note that children with egg allergies cannot receive the flu vaccine or Flumist. If your egg allergic child has asthma and is at a much higher risk of complications from influenza, please contact us for further recommendations.

If your child arrives ill to a flu clinic appointment and there is a question about vaccine administration, we will work our hardest to fit him/her in with a provider who can make a medical determination.

We are excited to have had a reduction in respiratory illness during 2010 and hope that, once again, through our vaccination programs, we will be able to do the same for your child this coming year.

A few exciting things going on at Senders Pediatrics:

- Follow Certified Parent Coach Amy Speidel's blog at www.parentingadvicethatworks.com
- Join Senders Pediatrics [Facebook Fan Page](#). We would love if you would "friend us" so that we have one more way of communicating with our patients. There are also some fun things about upcoming events that you won't want to miss.
- In support of several of our patients with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis, we are taking on a challenge to make a difference in our community by participating in the Arthritis Walk as a part of "Let's Move Together", the Arthritis Foundation's nationwide movement that encourages people to move to prevent or treat arthritis. We would love to have you support this cause as well. Click here for more information on the [2010 Arthritis Walk](#), happening this Sunday, September 12, 2010.

As always, thank you for your continued support of our practice. We look forward to taking care of your family's needs this fall.

Sincerely,

Senders Pediatrics

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