

# Health Hints

## Stay Flu-Free

(NAPSA)—The flu is nothing to sneeze at, so it's a good idea to protect yourself and your family by getting vaccinated.

“All of us are experiencing concerns over the threat of the new H1N1 (“Swine Flu”),” says Bonnie Offit, M.D., FAAP, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “However, we need to prepare ourselves for the seasonal flu, which every year proves to be a very serious threat. The best way that we can protect ourselves and our children is to get an annual influenza vaccine. While we wait for safety and efficacy studies on the new H1N1 vaccine, we should all be getting our flu vaccines as early as possible. Please don’t wait—get vaccinated when clinics open.”

### Flu Facts:

Many Americans are not aware of the true dangers of the flu. On average, each year the flu:

- Kills almost as many Americans as breast cancer, according to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Kills two to three times more Americans than HIV/AIDS
- Kills the equivalent of a major-league stadium full of people
- Affects 65 million Americans as they fall victim to influenza and flu-related complications, such as pneumonia, resulting in 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths, reports the Journal of the American Medical Association.

An influenza activity report released by the CDC found that 92 percent of the pediatric deaths resulting from influenza in the last few flu seasons were in children who weren’t vaccinated. Each year, the influenza strains change but, fortunately, vaccinations against influenza are also



updated each year to protect against the current strains.

### Find Help:

Whether you want a flu vaccination for an elderly parent, a child or yourself, there are several online educational resources to help you with questions regarding the flu virus. You can visit [www.findaflushot.com/clinic](http://www.findaflushot.com/clinic) to access a flu clinic locator, schedule a flu shot reminder, read the latest flu news and learn about H1N1.

### How to Protect Yourself:

In addition, the CDC says you can reduce your risk of catching the flu by taking the following precautions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Other ways to stay healthy during this flu season and all year round:

- Get plenty of sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Eat nutritious foods
- Manage your stress level.

### Learn More:

To learn more, call (866) 534-7330 or visit [www.findaflushot.com/clinic](http://www.findaflushot.com/clinic).