

EVERYONE NEEDS FLU VACCINE!

"Oh, but doc, We Just Don't Do That!"

by Doug Puder, MD



**All of the
Doctors, Nurses,
and Staff at
Clarkstown
Pediatrics
take flu vaccine
for their protection
and YOURS!**

...and none of us
got sick from
our flu shot!

Flumist is back:

It works as well as the shot but is in short supply. Manufacturing issues have been resolved so it is approved again. It is an option for healthy people age 2 to 50 when available.

But my child still got the flu last winter:

Most of the time flu vaccine gives full protection against influenza strains in our area. But sometimes the virus changes (mutates) or is different than what scientists predict. Even then, vaccinated people have milder illness. Most importantly, the most serious flu complications occur mostly in unvaccinated people. Also, protection against the H3N2 strain of *influenza* is much improved for this season.

...really? It protects you and everyone around you!

We often hear this from parents who otherwise trust us completely. They believe that all other vaccines are life saving, but the *flu* is no big deal. Parents may say "it doesn't work, I get sick from it, I never get the *flu*, etc..." The *American Academy of Pediatrics* has published the reasons they strongly recommend *influenza* or "*flu*" vaccine for *all* children over age six months and for *all* adults:

This past winter 180 influenza deaths occurred in children. More than 80% of these children were unvaccinated. Half of these deaths occurred in children who were previously healthy.

No need to worry about egg allergy:

Studies proved that even severely egg allergic children and adults can safely receive *influenza* vaccine without increased reaction. None of our egg allergic patients have reacted.

You cannot get sick from flu vaccine:

It is not a live vaccine so it cannot make you sick! We only use single dose, thimerosal free, prepackaged *influenza* vaccine. All *flu* vaccines cover four *influenza* strains (many only cover three). These are the four strains of *influenza* which are predicted to be in our community this winter.

Please take flu vaccine for yourself:

But also take it to protect your children and other people. If you become infected with *influenza* virus, you will be contagious for one day before you get sick. What if someone else caught the *flu* from you and got a serious complication? A fragile baby? An elderly person?

Can't I just take Tamiflu or Xofluza if I get sick?

We may recommend *Oseltamivir* or *Baloxavir* for those who develop the *flu*, but it is not a substitute for vaccination. Remember: if symptoms of the *flu* develop, get treated in the first 48 hours otherwise *Tamiflu/Xofluza* won't be as effective.