

Why are Thedacare Pediatricians Giving H1N1 Flu immunization to their own children?

Dear Editor,

ThedaCare Physicians pediatricians all agree that giving H1N1 vaccine to children is the best choice. All of us who have kids have chosen to immunize them against H1N1. We wanted to tell you why, and encourage you to give it to your children, too.

We are convinced the disease can cause serious illness in children.

Though most children who become ill with H1N1 will recover completely, about 1 percent will have serious complications. Even those without complications are miserable while the illness runs its course. We are vaccinating our own children to prevent this discomfort and the possibility for complications.

We are convinced the immunization is safe.

Although this is a new protein (H1N1 2009), the vaccine itself has the same extremely high safety characteristics of seasonal flu vaccine. There is no reason that we would expect any significant difference in how the H1N1 vaccine is tolerated by our kids' bodies.

Both nasal and injectable vaccines are okay.

The nasal spray or the injectable form are both appropriate for kids. In some cases, one form or another will be recommended for your child. There are clear guidelines about this and the people administering your child's immunization will have them readily available.

Is it better to get natural immunity?

No. This infection is causing significant discomfort in kids. It is far better to get immunity through an immunization. The vaccine lowers the risk of illness and possible complications.

Can't my child just take tamiflu (an antiviral medicine)?

The CDC is recommending that tamiflu be reserved for patients with serious underlying illness, high-risk health condition or who are extremely ill from the infection.

Where can my child receive the vaccine?

ThedaCare is partnering with local school districts and other health systems to help provide the vaccine to students at their schools. Please DO get it at your child's school if that is offered. It will be very efficient. If your child is not school-age, or their school doesn't offer it, our clinics will be offering it. Please check our special influenza web site, www.thedacarenow.org for information about availability.

Where can I get more information?

Two excellent web resources are <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/>
And www.vaccine.chop.edu/

Sincerely,

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