



ACT
Government
Health

Dear Parent/Guardian

Free influenza vaccine for children aged 6 months to under 5 years

Last month, the ACT government announced it will provide a free influenza ('flu') vaccine to children from six months to under five years of age to help protect them from getting sick this flu season.

You can get the free flu vaccine for your child through your usual immunisation provider, including your general practitioner or ACT Health Early Childhood Immunisation Clinics. Families should be aware that GPs may charge a consultation fee. The vaccine will be available from April 2018.

The 2017 flu season was a particularly bad season around the country. In the ACT, children under five years were most affected. We know children under five years of age are at increased risk of hospitalisation and severe illness, including death, from flu. Young children also contribute significantly to influenza transmission in the community.

A yearly flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the risk of your child getting sick with the flu and spreading it to others.

Given the flu season usually occurs during winter and spring, I encourage you to have your child vaccinated when the vaccine becomes available from April prior to the flu season. It is important to know that if your child is receiving the vaccine for the first time, they will require two doses at least four weeks apart.

For more information about the ACT Childhood Influenza Vaccination Program, please visit health.act.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Dr Paul Kelly
Chief Health Officer

29 March 2018