

Infectious diseases A-Z: Flu vaccine is a good match

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The flu vaccine is a good match for the 2019-2020 flu season, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Efficacy of the vaccine is estimated to be 45% so far this season. The CDC says the

vaccine was even better for kids, providing substantial protection at 55% efficacy among children and adolescents aged 6 months to-17.

In comparison, the CDC reported during the 2018-19 [influenza season](#), vaccine efficacy was estimated to be 29% against illnesses associated with any influenza virus.

"This flu season has been particularly hard on children," says Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at Mayo Clinic's Children's Center. "There have been more pediatric deaths at this point in the season than in any other year since we started keeping track, aside from during the 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic. This interim data from the CDC supports that everyone over 6 months of age benefits from getting influenza vaccine."

"This [flu season](#) had one of the earliest starts in early November, and we expect it to still continue for several more weeks. It is still not too late to get your flu shot if you haven't gotten it yet, and this data supports that it could help keep you and your children out of the doctor's office and hospital. This is especially important this year as [health care facilities](#) around the world are preparing for and dealing with COVID-19," says Rajapakse.

Vaccine can help prevent flu infection and reduce the risk of medical visits associated with influenza. "We know that people who been vaccinated against influenza, even if they do end up still catching it, have less severe illness, are less likely to require admission to a hospital or intensive care unit, and are less likely to die from the infection," says Rajapakse.

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