

## CDC: Flu vaccine 61% effective for children

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**Editor's note:** For the latest flu coverage, visit <https://www.aapublications.org/collection/influenza>.

Flu vaccine is 61% effective for children this season, according to interim estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Vaccination remains the best method for preventing influenza and its potentially serious complications, including those that can result in hospitalization and death,” authors wrote in a study published today in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Effectiveness estimates represent the reduction in a person’s risk of getting a flu virus that needs medical attention. The interim estimates are based on a study of 3,254 children and adults.

Researchers found effectiveness is 47% for the overall population and 61% for children 6 months through 17 years.

Influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 has been predominant this season for most of the country. The study showed the vaccine is 46% effective against this virus for the overall population and 62% effective for children.

Effectiveness against H1N1 is similar to the 2015-'16 season when H1N1 was predominant.

Influenza A (H3N2) has been more common in the Southeast. The vaccine has been 44% effective against this virus.

The CDC estimates 13.2 million to 15.2 million people have had the flu this season, 155,000 to 186,000 people have been hospitalized and 9,600 to 15,900 have died. There have been 28 confirmed pediatric deaths. In the past, 80% of these pediatric deaths were among unvaccinated children.

CDC experts expect flu to be elevated for several more weeks and continue to recommend vaccination for everyone 6 months and older. Inactivated influenza vaccine is the primary vaccine choice, while quadrivalent live attenuated influenza vaccine may be used for children who would not otherwise receive a vaccine, according to [AAP policy](#).

### Resources

- ["Recommendations for Prevention and Control of Influenza in Children, 2018-2019"](#)
- [AAP News story "How to code for flu vaccine, administration in 2018-'19 season"](#)
- [Information from the CDC about flu](#)
- [Information for parents on flu vaccine from HealthyChildren.org](#)
- [AAP News stories on flu](#)
- [Pediatrics seasonal flu article collection](#)

