

A call to arms

For the best line of defense against the flu, experts recommend the shot, not FluMist.



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and the Center of Disease Control (CDC) have recommended that FluMist, the nasal spray version of the influenza vaccine, not be used this coming flu season.

While FluMist was a safe and effective option during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic flu season, data indicates that it has been less effective in protecting against the flu over the past 3 years. Based on recommendations made by the AAP, ACIP, and CDC, all **Saint Alphonsus clinics will be providing the injected flu shot only.**

Flu Facts

- The flu season occurs from October to May.
- Influenza virus shifts and drifts from one strain to another each year.
- The 2015-2016 nasal flu vaccine is estimated to have been only 3% effective at protecting against the flu (versus an estimated 63% for the injected flu shot).
- Influenza and complications from the infection are hardest on infants, young children, pregnant women, and the elderly.
- Depending on the season, influenza causes anywhere between 3,300 and 49,000 deaths a year in the U.S.
- The flu vaccine is recommended for all infants and children ages 6 months and up.

Tips for helping kids deal with the flu shot.

- **Don't make promises.** We'll do the same. Our Pediatricians will work hard to not make the promise of a no-needle visit.
- **Bring distractions for the wait.** A game, book, music, or movie player will keep your child's mind occupied while in the waiting room instead of thinking about getting a shot.
- **One cough does the trick.** Coughing just as the needle goes in is a distraction technique. Ask your child to cough as the shot is being administered – studies have shown that kids feel less pain.
- **Set a good example.** Children watch their parents experience with shots. Know that your calm reactions and comments of trust go a long way.
- **Treat them.** Special treats, restaurants, or parks are great incentives after getting the flu shot and will keep your child's mind on something fun.

