

5 Ways to Help Your Kids Avoid the Flu



1 Be sure with a shot



Everyone over 6 months of age needs flu vaccine every year. Kids over age 2 can get flu nasal spray.

Protect your kids from life-threatening flu complications. Babies and toddlers 6 months to 2 years of age are especially vulnerable.

2 Color them healthy



Feed your child a diet rich in colorful foods. They're rich in immune-boosting vitamin C.

Citrus fruits, tomatoes, strawberries, bell peppers, Brussels sprouts and papaya are packed with vitamin C.

3 Hype hand-washing



Encourage your kids to make a habit of thoroughly washing hands with soap and water throughout the day.

Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers only when soap and water aren't available. (Keep them away from young hands. When swallowed, hand sanitizer can cause alcohol poisoning.)

4 Face the facts



Teach kids that your hands should never touch your face. Touching eyes, nose or mouth can invite the flu to settle in your airway.

The flu virus clings to surfaces like furniture, dishes, bedding and toys. (You can also inhale the virus when someone coughs or sneezes.)

5 Let them recharge



Allow kids to fully rest up after a long day with a good night's sleep. Sleep is important for maintaining a healthy immune system.

Infants need 11-18 hours of sleep. Toddlers and preschoolers need 11-14 hours. School-age kids need 10-11 hours, and teens need 8½-9½ hours.