



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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**MDHHS reports first influenza-associated pediatric death
in Michigan this season**

Michigan residents ages six months and older eligible for flu vaccine

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has confirmed the first influenza-associated pediatric death in Michigan for the 2022-2023 flu season.

The reported death involves a child from Ingham County who contracted Influenza A/H3. Nationally, there have been at least [111 influenza-associated pediatric deaths](#) reported during the current flu season.

“It’s not too late to get the flu vaccine,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, chief medical executive for MDHHS. “Once children reach six months of age it is recommended they receive two doses of the flu vaccine for their first series. In addition, pregnant women should get the flu vaccine during each pregnancy. Flu vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccine.”

Each year, influenza claims the lives of children across the United States. MDHHS continues to strongly recommend that everyone six months of age and older get a seasonal flu vaccine. Flu can be serious and lead to severe illness and hospitalizations. Flu vaccine is the best way to prevent getting the flu and can also reduce the severity of flu illness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that [since October](#) there have been at least 25-51 million flu illnesses, 12-25 million flu medical visits, 280,000-630,000 flu hospitalizations and 18,000-56,000 deaths nationally.

Most positive influenza specimens confirmed by the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories this flu season have been Influenza A/H3 virus. This virus can cause severe flu infections in children, as well as in adults. The H3N2 strain is a component of the 2022-2023 seasonal flu vaccine so getting vaccinated provides extra protection.

The influenza vaccine is especially important for persons at increased risk for complications from flu, including children, adults aged 65 years and older, persons of any age with underlying medical conditions and pregnant women. [Early estimates from Canada](#) suggest vaccination reduces the risk of influenza associated medical visits by 54% this season. Children less than six months of age are too young to be vaccinated and need to be protected by vaccination of their close contacts, including parents, siblings, grandparents, childcare workers and health care personnel. In addition to vaccination, early treatment with an antiviral drug can help prevent flu infections from

becoming more severe. Check with your doctor promptly if you are at higher risk of serious flu complications and you get flu symptoms.

Currently, for the 2022-2023 flu season, only 33% of Michigan residents have been vaccinated against flu. [According to data from the Michigan Care Improvement Registry](#), flu vaccine coverage among children ages six months through 17 years is more than 3% lower for the 2022-2023 flu season (18.8%) compared to the 2021-2022 flu season (22.2%).

To find flu vaccine near you, call your health care provider, local health department or visit [Vaccines.gov](#).

For more information about the flu, visit [Michigan.gov/flu](#).

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