

This information is for general informational purposes only and SHOULD NOT be relied upon as a substitute for sound professional medical advice, evaluation or care from your physician or other qualified healthcare provider.

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and the Flu

The American Academy of Pediatrics has indicated that the flu poses particular concern for children with special health care needs. Children most at risk for developing serious outcomes include those with:

epilepsy	cerebral palsy
intellectual & developmental disability	chronic respiratory disease
metabolic and endocrine disorders	congenital heart disease
neuromuscular disorders	Immune deficiencies

To help keep your family healthy, try to do the following:

- Avoid close contact (about 6-10 feet) with sick people
- Teach your children (and remind them often) to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Alcohol –based hand cleaners are also effective
- Always use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue in the trash after use. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze into your sleeve instead of your hands
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth
- Keep surfaces (bedside tables, kitchen counters and toys) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label

Special preparations you can make for a flu outbreak (or other emergency):

- Fill out a copy of the AAP Emergency Information form. Keep one at home, one in the car, one at school or daycare, and other places your child goes regularly
- Keep a list of all physicians your child sees, including contact information, attached to the Emergency Information form
- Keep an up-to-date list of all medications taken, including dosage and frequency, and pharmacy contact information
- Keep an up-to-date list of all medical supplies and equipment used by your child, including contact information for suppliers
- Be sure to have basic household supplies on hand for your family such as soap, anti-bacterial wipes, paper products, clear liquids such as sports drinks, over-the-counter medications for cold symptoms, and items needed for babies or pets

For more information:

- The US Dept of Health and Human Services has information and updates about seasonal and H1N1 flu. Visit www.flu.gov
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with specific questions at 800-CDC-info; TTY 888-232-6348; or www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu
- Statements from the American Academy of Pediatrics can be found at www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/swineflu.htm
- Call the Alabama Department of Public Health Influenza Hotline toll-free at 1-877-377-7285 from 7am to 7pm Monday through Friday. A live operator is available to answer your call and provide flu information. After hours, leave a message and your call will be returned the next day.

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