

Strategies for Communicating with Families about the Pediatric Flu Vaccine



With fall upon us and the winter months ahead, the flu vaccine is one of our best tools to protect children against serious respiratory infections. You are families' most trusted source of information about immunizations, and there are evidence-based strategies to communicate about vaccines in a way that raises confidence and decreases hesitancy.

1. Use presumptive communication to make vaccines the default behavior

Example: "Your son is due for his flu shot today."

2. Give a strong and personalized recommendation

Example: "For me, it's important to get my family vaccinated and I make sure to get it done every fall."

3. Address myths and misinformation through focusing on the disease

Example: "I know there is a lot of information out there on the flu shot and it can be difficult to separate fact from fiction. The flu isn't just a bad cold. Thousands of children are hospitalized each year due to flu complications, and unfortunately, some healthy children die from the flu."

4. For those parents who continue to be hesitant, use motivational interviewing technique to open a conversation

Example: "You seem to be concerned about the flu vaccine. As pediatricians, we are asked a lot of questions about it. Would you mind sharing your particular concerns?"

5. Tailor messaging to the individual situation

Example: "Your daughter has asthma and we know the vaccine protects these children from flu complications. Just like controller inhalers, this is another step we can take to keep her healthy this winter."

For more information on communicating effectively about vaccines, check out the following resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

Video: Flu Vaccine Myths and Facts

➔ Watch [here](#).

FAQs to Common Parent Questions about Flu Vaccines

➔ Click [here](#).

