DID YOU KNOW?

Children & youth who have special health care needs or disabilities who get the flu:
- Can become sicker and stay sick longer
- May experience complications like pneumonia, croup, bronchitis, and other infections
- Are at greater risk of death
- Are most vulnerable if they have neurological problems or intellectual disabilities. Children with chronic lung disease, asthma, heart disease, blood disorders, diabetes mellitus, kidney disorders, liver disorders, metabolic disorders, HIV, AIDS or cancer are also at increased risk.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

As the parent or caregiver you can:
- **If your child is older than 6 months,**
  - Follow the CDC guidelines and get him/her vaccinated as soon as vaccines are available
  - Make sure your child gets the vaccination in shot form, not the nasal spray
  - Find out where to get your child vaccinated - the doctor’s office or clinic, local pharmacies, school, other community locations
  - Let your child’s doctor know that he/she has been vaccinated against the flu.
  - Ask your child’s doctor if an additional dose may be needed this year
- **If your child is younger than 6 months, take these precautions:**
  - Make sure everyone in your house and those who care for your child are vaccinated
  - Encourage all who care for your child to wash their hands with soap and water frequently and cover their nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing
  - Recognize the flu symptoms, get medical help as soon as possible, and keep sick people away from your child

GET SERIOUS!

Almost 2/3 of children with an underlying condition who died due to the flu in 2009 had a neurological problem.

ACT NOW!

Don’t wait to get your child vaccinated. Call your doctor for an appointment or find a location at vaccine.healthmap.org/.

KNOW the FLU:

Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.
LEARN THE FACTS:

- **COST:** If your child is covered by Medicaid or CHIP, the flu shot should be covered. Most private health insurance plans cover the cost of a flu shot as a preventative health measure. Another resource is Vaccines for Children, a federal program, that provides vaccines at no cost to children who might not otherwise be vaccinated because of inability to pay. If you do pay out-of-pocket, you can expect to pay from $15 to $30.

- **SAFETY:** Flu vaccines, like any medical product, carry some risks but are considered safe.

- **SIDE-EFFECTS:** Some minor side effects that could occur are: soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given; low grade fever; aches. If these problems occur, they begin soon after the shot and usually last 1 to 2 days.

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD GETS THE FLU?

- **Call or take your child to the doctor right away if your child develops fever or flu symptoms.** The doctor may treat your child with an antiviral drug as that will work best when started as early as possible after symptoms.

- **Do not give a child younger than 4 over-the-counter cold medicines without consulting a health care provider.**

- **Give children and teens 5 years and older cold medicines with acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), to relieve symptoms.**

- **Do not give aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) to children or teenagers who have the flu as this can cause a rare but serious illness.**

- **Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids.**

- **Keep your child at home, except for doctor visits, for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone.** Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.

- **Seek emergency medical assistance if your child:**
  - Is having trouble breathing
  - Has a bluish skin color
  - Is not drinking enough fluids
  - Has severe or persistent vomiting
  - Is not waking up or interacting
  - Is irritable and does not want to be held
  - Has flu-like symptoms that improve but then become worse

- **In addition to the above, seek emergency medical assistance if your INFANT:**
  - Is unable to eat
  - Has trouble breathing
  - Has no tears when crying
  - Has significantly fewer wet diapers than normal