

# Keep Your Children Healthy this Winter!



**H**ere is some information about the flu and other illnesses, as well as practical tips on what to do if your child becomes ill. Remember, it is a good idea to take advantage of the government provided immunisations. If you are not aware of the schedule, check with your health provider. Flu vaccines can be given to children over 6 months of age, but are not subsidized unless you child has certain chronic illnesses, such as asthma or some cardiac problems.

**If you have any questions about the flu vaccine, visit your health care provider or call the Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) on 0800 IMMUNE (466863) or check out the website [www.immune.org.nz](http://www.immune.org.nz)**

## KEEP YOUR CHILD'S IMMUNISATIONS CURRENT AND ALSO...

- Provide a healthy diet, with plenty of fruit and vegetables. Avoid sweets and lollies, limiting treats like that to once or twice a week.
- Continue breastfeeding if possible.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with sick children (*this is a tricky one – younger children are exposed to a wide range of illnesses from school ages siblings*).
- Don't expose children to cigarette smoke (*second hand smoke can occur even if parents are going outside to smoke – smoke molecules remain in the skin*).
- Don't take your children to daycare when they are sick.
- Dress your children warmly.
- Practice good hand washing, and teach your child to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before meals (*this one is extremely important– many viruses and bacteria are passed from person to person by touching your hand to your nose or mouth*).



**Practice good hand washing...**

## PRACTICAL TIPS FOR CARING FOR YOUR SICK BABY OR CHILD:

- Care for the child in a separate, well-ventilated room away from other members of the household.
- Give regular paracetamol or ibuprofen for fever in the dose recommended on the package (*Unless your health care provider says otherwise. Do not give medication containing aspirin to children under 14.*)
- Offer cool fluids frequently, including water, fruit juice and milk.
- Dress your child in light weight clothing.
- Give a lukewarm bath or shower. (*Do not give cold baths or showers, which can be unpleasant and distressing for the child, and does not lower body temperature.*)
- Use salt-water drops (saline) to treat a stuffy nose.
- Keep the child at home and resting until they can no longer pass on the virus.



## VISIT YOUR DOCTOR IF YOUR CHILD...

- is unusually sleepy, is fast breathing, or has difficulty breathing
- has a 'fit', or convulsion
- is refusing fluids, or has greatly decreased urine output
- is complaining of a sore neck or head (though children frequently have aches and pains with viral illnesses)
- has a rash you cannot identify
- is not improving after 48 hours

**If you have any questions or concerns about your child's condition, take them to your GP.**



**For further information contact**

**Pukekohe Family Health Care**

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