

## **PRESERVATIVE- FREE FLU VACCINE by Kaye Ivanoff, R.N. SHOTS, etc.**

Have you and those you love taken the flu vaccine this fall? Many people do not think the flu vaccine is for them, but beginning with the 2010-2011 flu season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends a form of the flu vaccine for all children, teens and adults beginning at six (6) months of age, including all pregnant women, caregivers and those with chronic health conditions.

Most parents understand the importance of having their children vaccinated against the numerous, very serious diseases that have killed so many of our nation's children in years past. The influenza pandemics of 1918, 1957, 1968 and 1976 claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and adults alike, in the U.S. alone. And although most of the vaccines used for children now only contain a minute amount of the mercury-based preservative called thimerosal, some parents are still concerned about the possible effects the preservative may have on their children. Even though there is no scientific evidence to support a link between thimerosal and the developmental disorder known as autism, many parents remain very cautious and desire preservative-free flu vaccine for their children.

Because of this renewed interest in the effect of preservatives and other additives in our foods and medications, the use of preservative-free flu vaccine is becoming very popular among adults, as well; especially those with an allergy to thimerosal and people with certain conditions such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia.

Although the flu vaccine does not cause the flu, some people still experience flu-like symptoms following the flu shot, including fever, chills, muscle ache and tiredness. Children and adults may help offset these effects by taking acetaminophen or ibuprofen after receiving the vaccine. Parents are advised to NEVER give a child aspirin after the flu shot as it may cause the deadly illness known as REYES Syndrome.

As with traditional flu vaccine, children 6 months to 9 years old who are receiving the preservative-free flu vaccine for the first time are to receive two full doses given at least 28 days apart in order to trigger the full initial immune response. Because it is more expensive than traditional flu vaccine, many providers do not offer preservative-free flu vaccine, but SHOTS, etc. has a plentiful supply available for both children and adults. Please call 615-469-7413 or visit [www.SHOTSetc.com](http://www.SHOTSetc.com) for more information.

*This article was written by Kaye Ivanoff, RN of SHOTS, etc., a Nashville-based provider of all vaccinations needed by adolescents and adults to stay healthy for work or school requirements, world travel and everyday life. For more information about services available for companies and individuals, please call 615-469-7413 or visit [www.SHOTSetc.com](http://www.SHOTSetc.com). SHOTS, etc. is located at 7648 Hwy 70 So. Ste 15, Nashville, TN 37221.*

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