

DECEMBER 2017

## Parents and siblings should get flu vaccine

**A** new research study from St. Jude Children's Research Hospital showed that young leukemia patients who receive the influenza (flu) vaccine are not well protected against the illness by the flu vaccine alone. This suggests more steps are needed to protect these high-risk patients. The findings appeared in the October 16, 2017, issue of *The Journal of Pediatrics*.

"The annual flu shot is still recommended for patients with acute leukemia who are being treated for their disease," said Elisabeth Adderson, MD, of St. Jude Infectious Diseases. "However, the results do highlight the need for more research

in this area and for us to redouble our efforts to protect our patients through other means."

The flu is a virus that causes symptoms like fever, chills, cough and body aches. It can easily pass from one person to the next. Most St. Jude patients have weak immune systems because of their diseases or treatments. In these patients the disease can be severe. Your child might develop breathing problems that require a hospital stay, or the flu could even lead to death.

The best ways to prevent flu infections are:

- Clean hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand

cleaner,

- Avoid contact with those who have flu symptoms,
- Avoid crowds during flu season,
- Get an annual flu shot, and
- Take anti-viral medicines after being around people who have the flu (under a doctor's advice).

Vaccinating all family members helps provide a circle of protection around the patient. It is one way to keep the virus from coming close to your child.

St. Jude provides the seasonal flu vaccine to:

- All patients,
- You and other adults who live with and care for your child,
- Siblings who are 3 years old or older, and
- All staff members.

The free flu shots for caregivers and siblings are offered Monday through Friday from 1–4 p.m. in the Patient Care Center Assessment and Triage area.

If you have questions about the vaccine, talk to your doctor or your child's primary clinic staff.

## Explore new services offered for you

The Patient and Family Experience Office has partnered with various St. Jude departments to bring several new services to St. Jude families this year. Check out this list and see if some of these might benefit you.

### Concierge Service: Best Upon Request (BEST)

The BEST team can: run errands on or off campus (shipping, food service, courier service, financial services, auto services), help with room relocation, gift services, technology services and transportation. To find out more, call 901-595-4000, email [stjudeconcierge@bestuponrequest.com](mailto:stjudeconcierge@bestuponrequest.com) or look for the BEST team member at the Patient Care Center north desk reception area every weekday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

### Zipcar

Zipcar offers vehicles with car seats that patient families can rent by the hour or day. The vehicles are located outside Target House and the Chili's Care Center. Annual fees and application fees are waived for St. Jude families. You can sign up through [zipcar.com/stjude](http://zipcar.com/stjude) and pick up your zip card in the Linda R. Hajar Family Resource Center. Once you're a member, reserve a car online or on your phone. Make sure to return the car at the end of your reservation time to avoid late fees. If you have an international driver's license, visit [zipcar.com/apply/foreign-drivers](http://zipcar.com/apply/foreign-drivers) to learn which documents you will need for using Zipcar.

### Sitter Services

Sitter Services are provided at Target House. There is a \$5 sign-up fee per child for each service, but St. Jude will cover the rest of the service cost for up to two sessions a month. These services can be in the weekly group setting or individual setting (for isolation patients). Look for signs at Target House about when the group meets. Ask the Target House staff if you have questions.

### Shipt

Shipt, a national grocery delivery service, is offering free annual memberships to St. Jude families. You can get an access code from the St. Jude Patient Services staff. In Memphis, Shipt delivers groceries from Kroger.

### Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden

Enjoy this garden of flowers, foliage and a lotus water fountain any day of the week. It is located in the breezeway between the Chili's Care Center lobby and the Richard C. Shadyac ALSAC Tower.

## Letters to Santa

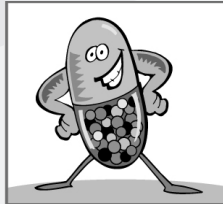
This year, the Patient Care Center Gift Shop will help St. Jude kids get their letters to the North Pole.

Beginning the Monday after Thanksgiving, patients and siblings can pick up a "Dear Santa" letter form and envelope in the hospital's Gift Shop.

A special mailbox will be located outside the shop where your child can mail the letter. The mailbox will be in place from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

If your child places the letter in this mailbox by Friday, December 15, you might get a response from Santa. If you decide to take part in this holiday fun, please help your child fill out the letter and envelope, so Santa will know where to send his replies.





# Talking about Medicines

## Medication safety

By Shane Cross, PharmD, Pharmaceutical Services

The risk of accidental poisoning in children is real. Most people think of household chemicals when they think of accidental poisonings, but medicines are also a common cause. Below are just a few tips for the safe handling of medicines in your home.

- Learn the names of all the medicines in your home.
- Ask for and use child-proof containers for all your medicines.
- Keep all medicines locked up and out of sight.
- Keep medicines in their original containers.
- Do not refer to medicines as “candy.”
- Clean out your medicine cabinet often and safely dispose of any expired or leftover medicines.

If you suspect someone has taken something poisonous, call the Poison Control Center right away. The national toll-free telephone number is 1-800-222-1222. It is offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This hotline can connect you to your local poison control center.

## Have coffee with the St. Jude CEO

The president and chief executive officer of St. Jude would like to talk with you about your experience as a patient family.

Thursday, December 7, James R. Downing, MD, will host Coffee with the CEO. It is an informal chat open to all St. Jude parents and patients. These events take place for about an hour in the lobby of the Marlo Thomas Center for Global Education and Collaboration. Enjoy free Starbucks drinks and desserts during the event. You can arrive and leave as needed to fit your schedule. If you miss this event, be sure to attend one in 2018. Look for signs around the hospital.

Talking with Downing at one of these Coffee with the CEO events is just one way to share your thoughts about St. Jude. You can also speak to any staff member, including your child’s doctor, nurse, nurse manager and social worker. At times, you will also be asked to fill out patient satisfaction surveys. Please take time to share your experiences and ideas for improvements.



JAMES R. DOWNING, MD  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer

*St. Jude Parents* is published on the first of each month by Family-Centered Care Services and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.**

To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Alicia Huettel, RN, MSN, at 901-595-5453 ([parents\\_newsletter@stjude.org](mailto:parents_newsletter@stjude.org)) or Lois Young ([lois.young@stjude.org](mailto:lois.young@stjude.org)). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit [www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter](http://www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter). St. Jude is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ATTENTION: If you speak another language, assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

تنبيه: إذا كنت تتحدث باللغة العربية فيمكنك الاستعانة بخدمات المساعدة اللغوية المتوفرة لك مجاناً. يرجى الاتصال بالرقم 1-866-278-5833 (الهاتف النصي: 1-901-595-1040).



## St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

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