

# October - Respiratory season and fall immunizations

## Protect your children from respiratory illnesses this winter

Respiratory illnesses tend to increase as we spend more time indoors. Common colds, the flu and COVID-19 spread through tiny droplets as people who are sick breathe, talk, cough or sneeze. When other people breathe in or touch these droplets and then their eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands they may become sick.

There are a handful of steps both children and adults can take to protect themselves and limit the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use alcohol-based sanitizer if soap and water is not available.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, mouth and nose.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- If you have symptoms, stay home and stay away from people at higher risk of serious illness. If you are sick and cannot stay away from others, wear a mask. Learn more about masks here: [Masks \(bccdc.ca\)](https://www.bccdc.ca)

## Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations

The best way to protect others and reduce the risk of getting sick with the flu and COVID-19 is to [get immunized](#). The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and available for free to anyone aged six months and older.

It is much safer to get the vaccines than to get the illnesses. Register your children with the Get Vaccinated system so that you can be invited to book their vaccinations when they are due.

Learn more here: [Immunizations - Fraser Health Authority](#)

## School-aged immunizations

As children get older, the protection from some infant immunizations can wear off. Children can be at risk of new diseases as they enter kindergarten and, in their pre-teen and teen years. Getting your child vaccinated on schedule is the best way to protect them from many dangerous diseases.

All routine school-aged immunizations are free in British Columbia. If your child has not yet had all their vaccines, please make an appointment with a public health unit, family doctor, nurse practitioner or pharmacy. If your child's record shows their vaccines are not up to date but they did get vaccines from a health care provider outside of public health:

- Contact the health care provider who immunized your child and ask for a copy of the immunization record.
- Report these immunizations to Public Health online at <http://www.fraserhealth.ca/immunizationform>

Learn more about school-aged immunizations, including how to access your child's records, here: [Children and youth immunizations – Fraser Health Authority](#)