

**School Newsletter article (elementary and middle schools)
FluMist vaccination program**

Free program offers no-shot flu immunizations to students

This year you can protect your child from the flu and avoid missed time at school and at work. It's FREE and EASY.

All kindergarten through 8th-grade students in Alachua County are being offered the FluMist nasal spray, which is a safe and effective way of preventing the flu. While this vaccine is designed to protect against 'normal' seasonal flu, experts say that it may also help protect against the swine flu. The spray will be given at school this fall, which means no trips to a doctor's office.

FluMist is not a shot! It's a gentle mist delivered into the nose, and naturally kids prefer it to shots.

FluMist was given to many Alachua County students in 2006 and helped cut down on absences due to flu. More than 90% of the parents who took advantage of it said they would do it again.

To get your child immunized, just read the information sheet and fill out the consent form sent home with your child from school. Then return the form to school by September 24. Students can give the form to their teacher, but please remind them to do so—we don't want them stuck in backpacks!

If you need another copy of the information or consent form, go to the Alachua County Health Department website at www.doh.state.fl.us/chdAlachua. You can also call the Health Department at (352) 334-7950.

We encourage you to take advantage of this SAFE, FREE and EASY program to protect your child from the flu. That way your student can stay in school and you won't miss work. If enough children are immunized, it could protect the entire community—including you and your family.