

As your healthcare provider,
I recommend the FLU vaccine...

Please **THINK TWICE** and vaccinate!!

INFLUENZA IS NOT A STOMACH BUG, it's a virus that affects the lungs. Flu symptoms include a high fever, cough, exhaustion, headache, sore muscles, and shaking chills. Sudden onset of symptoms can mean a trip to the hospital with an extended stay in the ICU, though for many, it's deadly. Influenza is a serious disease.



Alana Yaksich was a healthy 5 year old when she died from influenza in 2005. Her photo is used with the permission of her family in Michigan.

I heard the vaccine will give you the flu...

The Flu **VIRUS** gives you the flu, not the vaccine. The side effects of the vaccine could include **mild** flu-like symptoms that last for a day or two. It's very minor compared to real influenza.

My family never gets the flu.

Anyone can get the flu. Just because you haven't gotten it before doesn't mean you can't. The flu can make anyone sick, not just "un-healthy" people. Some people carry the flu virus without being sick but they can still **pass it to others** and make them sick.

It's just the flu, right?

The flu **kills** more people than all other vaccine-preventable diseases combined, every year. It's a serious disease with real consequences. On average 36,000 people die from the flu every year in the U. S.

Why is the flu so serious?

Body aches and fever shouldn't cause death!

The flu causes many other problems including pneumonia, seizures, dehydration, inflammation of the brain, and staph infections. That's why **it's not "just the flu!"**

I heard the vaccine doesn't even work...

The vaccine **does** work. If you are vaccinated you are less likely to get the flu if you are exposed. If you do get sick, you are **less likely to be hospitalized**. And you won't pass the virus to others, bonus!

Alana's Story (as told by her Aunt, JoAnna Yaksich, from West Bloomfield, Michigan)

"In 2003, my brother's beautiful 5 yr. old daughter, Alana, died from the flu in about 18 hours. One day earlier, she's full of life, playing with her brothers, and the next, limp and lifeless. The ironic thing is she looked perfect, like a doll, with *no* sign of disease. But the sneaky little virus attacked her brain and rendered her brain dead in no time.

NO WAY TO COMPREHEND THAT....IT WAS THE FLU!

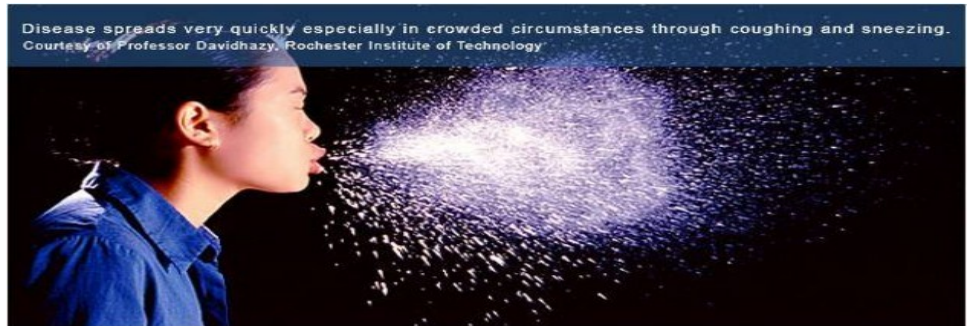
At the time, I did not know influenza is **NOT** an intestinal illness but a respiratory one and a very dangerous virus at that. The fact is, there are **MANY** people today that still don't know and don't take flu seriously. **Alana is proof that flu can and does kill, even previously healthy children and adults.** The magnitude of the loss was unbearable and almost suffocating. **Anger, sadness, devastating heartbreak, disbelief,** a million things crowd your head. Life would NEVER be the same again as grief and reminders of the fragility of life were now center stage. Her death affected an entire family, school, and church community. The collateral damage was far and wide.

Alana was such a beautiful, fearless, determined spirit. I was so looking forward to being her "special person" in her kindergarten class that early February 2003. Instead, I was going to her funeral. The special valentine I bought was put next to her in her casket. I was buying flower arrangements as beautiful as she was that she'd never see. Nothing made sense.

**Fog sets in and you have no idea how you'll make it through the next day,
let alone the rest of your life."**

For more on this story go to: www.ksenijasavicblog.com/index.cfm?q=Alana and the foundation set up in Alana's memory: www.alanasfoundation.org.

Influenza is spread when people cough and sneeze around you. The virus also lives on surfaces for hours, making it easy to catch long after someone with the flu has left a room.



For additional information on this vaccine and all vaccines please see the following trustworthy resources:

www.vaccine.chop.edu

www.aimtoolkit.org

www.shotbyshot.org

www.familiesfightingflu.org

www.cdc.gov/vaccines

www.michigan.gov/immunize

If, after reading this information, you still feel vaccination is not right for you or your child, please follow this advice:

Make sure all health care professionals, including ambulance drivers, emergency rooms and urgent care centers, know you or your child is not fully vaccinated. It could help them diagnose and treat a vaccine preventable disease.

Symptoms of flu can include fever, cough, body aches, chills, and extreme tiredness.

