

MEMO

Date: October 23, 2020
TO: Susan Barndollar
From Howard Taras
RE: Common Side Effects of Flu Shots during COVID-19 Pandemic

Many school nurses have called to ask whether recent flu vaccine recipients should be excluded from school for symptoms associated with both the vaccine side effects and COVID-19.

Symptoms and signs that could be a manifestation of both the flu shot and of COVID-19 are: headache, fever, nausea, and muscle aches.

For the nasal spray flu vaccine, the symptoms-in-common are: runny nose, headache, vomiting, muscle aches, fever, cough (in vaccinated adults) and sore throat (in vaccinated older children).

My recommendations, in these circumstances, are to:

1. Exclude the recipient of the vaccine during the period of time they have that symptom or sign
2. Readmit the vaccine recipient back to the school setting if the symptom or sign resolves within 24 hours
3. If the vaccine symptom does not self-resolve within 24 hours, treat it as a possible COVID-19 symptom or sign and follow our protocol, as outlined in the "[Decision Tree](#)".

I hope school nurses will consider this as a way to move forward when they are uncertain about actions to take during these circumstances.