



September 1, 2020

Dear PANS Families –

As we move into fall, our lives are still dramatically impacted by the COVID pandemic. Too many families have experienced illness or the death of a loved one, and everyone has faced upheaval at work and school as well as in their social and communal lives. Many children and young adults are returning to school with either partially or fully remote learning. Many families are struggling with financial losses and with the pressures of multiple people working/learning on-line from home. We have seen the emotional impact on our patients and their families due to social isolation, the loss of “normal”, and fear of illness.

The data continue to show that public health guidelines for **masking, physical distancing, and sanitizing** bring infection rates down and allow for society to reopen more safely. We encourage you to practice these habits so that more of our schools and colleges can return to in-person education where we know our kids and young adults grow and learn most effectively. We are all depending on each other for our safety.

Here at PANS, we have been so happy to greet your families over the summer as you have come in for well visits and we continue to safely care for acute illnesses and chronic medical problems. It’s been remarkable to see how resilient our families are — finding ways to pursue health and even to thrive — in the midst of so many challenges.

With fall, **influenza vaccination** season has also arrived. It **has never been more important** for everyone over age 6 months to get a flu shot. Decreasing the number and severity of flu infections will prevent unnecessary testing (since flu and COVID have overlapping symptoms) and avoid potentially serious illness from simultaneous infection with SARS-COV2 and influenza.

We have created a **flu shot clinic schedule** which will allow us to vaccinate our patients (and their parents/guardians) with safety measures in place, as follows. To schedule, try calling the office at low volume times: 10a-12:30p, 2-3:30p.

- Flu shot clinic will be held on one weekend afternoon per week — starting September 12, opening at 1:00pm
- During flu shot clinic, no regular office visits will take place
- All appointments must be scheduled in advance (no walk-ins)
- Flu shot screening questionnaires for patients must be completed on-line on MyChart before the appointment
- Parents/guardians who wish to receive flu shots in our office may do so – this must be scheduled in advance and they must arrive with completed paper questionnaires and provide payment at time of service (see the [website FAQs](#) for details)
- In addition to all current safety protocols, the hallways will be one-way and everyone will exit out our back door

Special notes:

If a patient is **due for their annual physical**, our staff will ask you to schedule a well visit at which they will receive their flu shot. At this time, we have flu vaccine available for commercially insured patients. Our supply of **VFC and CHIP** influenza vaccines has not arrived in the office. We will post on social media and send out an announcement when these vaccines are available.

Please let us know how we can help you and your family through the unique transitions of “back to school” this year.

Sincerely,

Trish Brunner, MD, Shoshana E Waskow, MD, and Bilkis Hirani, MD