



Flu Prevention

December 2024



What is the FLU?

- Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization and death.
- Flu is different from a cold.
- Flu normally comes on suddenly

Flu Symptoms

- Fever *
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue

* Not everyone with flu will have a fever

How Flu Spreads

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu viruses on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

Period of Contagiousness

- You may be able to pass on flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.
- People with flu are most contagious in the first 3-4 days after their illness begins.
- Some otherwise healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 days after becoming sick.
- Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others with flu viruses for an even longer time.

People at High Risk

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old.
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant women (and women up to two weeks postpartum).
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- Also, American Indians and Alaska Natives seem to be at higher risk of flu complications.
- Also people having the medical conditions on the next slide.

Medical Conditions Putting You At Risk

- Asthma
- Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions
- Chronic lung disease
- Heart disease
- Blood disorders
- Endocrine disorders
- Kidney disorders
- Liver disorders
- Weakened immune system due to disease or medication

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Recommendations

- Take time to get a flu vaccine.
 - CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
 - While there are many different flu viruses, a flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research suggests will be most common.
 - Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctor's visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu related hospitalizations.
 - Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Recommendations Cont.

- Take everyday preventative actions to stop the spread of germs.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
 - If you are sick with flu symptoms the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities.
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available use alcohol based hand sanitizer.
 - Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Recommendations Cont.

- Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.
 - If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can be used to treat your illness.
 - Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu symptoms.
 - Studies show that flu antiviral drugs work best for treatment when they are started within 2 days of getting sick.

MOST IMPORTANTLY

The #1 way to prevent any infection or illness is **GOOD**
and **FREQUENT HANDWASHING!**