

PREVENTING THE FLU: GET VACCINATED

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccination each fall.

There are two types of vaccines:

1. **The “flu shot”** - an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than 6 months.
2. **The nasal-spray flu vaccine**— a vaccine made with live, weakened viruses that do not cause the flu (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccinated”). LAIV is approved for use in healthy people 5 years to 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

About two weeks after vaccination, antibodies develop that protect against influenza virus infection. Flu vaccines will not protect against influenza-like illnesses caused by other viruses.

When To Get Vaccinated

October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but getting vaccinated in December or even later can still be beneficial. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May.



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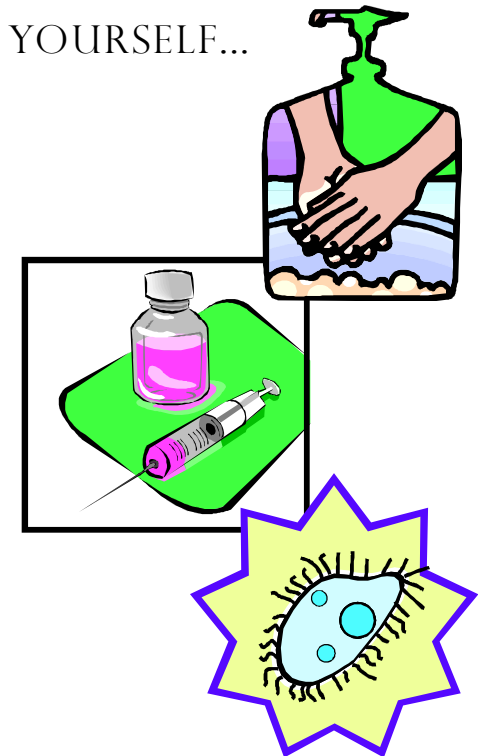
or Toll Free 866-727-5396

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INFLUENZA

“The Flu”

PROTECT
YOURSELF...



...AND
OTHERS.



What is influenza (flu)?

* The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza *viruses*. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.

How does the flu spread?

* The main way the flu virus spreads is from person to person in the respiratory droplets of *coughs and sneezes*. When an infected person coughs/sneezes, droplets are propelled up to 3 feet through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of nearby people. Though much less frequent, the viruses also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose before washing their hands.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

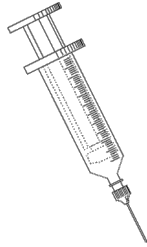
* The flu is a *respiratory illness*.

Symptoms of the flu include: fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, & muscle aches.

Children can have additional gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, & diarrhea, but these symptoms are uncommon in adults.

Although the term “stomach flu” is sometimes used to describe vomiting, nausea or diarrhea, these illnesses are caused by certain other viruses & bacteria, but are rarely related to influenza.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF AGAINST THE FLU?



By far, the single best way to prevent the flu is for individuals, especially people at high risk for serious complications from the flu, to **get a vaccination each fall**.

However, there are other good health habits that can help prevent the flu. These are:

- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.** When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- If possible, **stay home** from work, school and errands **when you are sick**.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
- **Washing your hands often** will help protect you from germs.



What is the difference between a Cold and the Flu?

The cold and the flu are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar flu-like symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the differences between them based on symptoms alone.

In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness and dry cough are more common and intense.

Colds are usually milder than the flu and usually don't result in serious health problems. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose.

Remember : Antibiotics Don't Work for treating the cold or the flu!

Antibiotics kill bacteria, *not viruses such as:*

- *Colds or flu
- *Most coughs and bronchitis
- *Sore throats not caused by strep
- *Runny Noses

Taking antibiotics for viral infections, such as a cold, cough, the flu or most bronchitis, will not:

- *Cure the infections,
- *Keep other individuals from catching the illness,
- *Or help you feel better.