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### When should you go to the doctor?

Some cases of the flu are serious. If you or someone in your family is very sick, you should call your doctor right away.

The flu is serious if **your child** has:

- a high fever that won't go away
- trouble breathing
- a bluish skin color
- refused fluids
- another medical condition that gets worse, like asthma.

Instead of aspirin, give a child or teenager an aspirin substitute, such as Tylenol® or Advil®.

The flu is serious if **you** have:

- a high fever that won't go away
- trouble breathing
- pain or pressure in your chest
- fainted or feel like fainting
- felt confused.

Prevention is the best medicine. Just because it is flu season doesn't mean you will get sick. **Be safe. Be smart.** Take steps to stay healthy and avoid the flu.

**Cover your mouth! Coughing and sneezing spread the flu.**

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**Get a flu shot every year. It's inexpensive, and you can get one from your doctor, local public health department, or urgent care center.**

Are you at high risk of getting the flu? If you are in one of these categories, make sure you get a flu shot early:

- age 65 or older
- children ages 6 to 23 months
- children or adults with ongoing health problems
- pregnant
- caregiver for children or elderly persons

**For more information about the flu, or to get a flu shot, contact your county public health department.**



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*Promoting and protecting the health of the public  
and the environment*



**?** *What do you do to*  
**prevent**  
*the* **FLU**





### What do you do to prevent the flu?

Every year we hear about the flu in the news. But what is the flu? How do you get it? How do you treat it? How do you keep from getting it?

### What is the flu?

Influenza or “the flu” is an illness that affects our entire body, including the lungs. As many as one in five Americans will get the flu each year. A virus that spreads from person to person causes flu. The illness can be mild, like a bad cold, or it can be very serious. In fact, people can die from the flu.

### How do you get the flu?

You get the flu from other people. The flu virus spreads through coughing or sneezing. It also spreads by touching something that a sick person has touched and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

### How do you know you have the flu?

Sometimes you can have the flu and not know it. Here are some signs that you might have the flu:

- high fever (temperature higher than 100 degrees Fahrenheit)
- headache
- fatigue
- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose

Children and some adults may also have:

- upset stomach
- vomiting.

### What should you do if you have the flu?

There is no instant cure for the flu. But there are things you can do to help yourself feel better:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink lots of liquids like water, fruit juice and thin soup.
- Avoid drinking alcohol.
- Don't smoke.

You can buy over-the-counter medicines that treat flu symptoms at the store. They might make you feel better, but they will not cure the flu.

The best way to prevent the flu is to **get a flu shot** each fall. You can get a flu shot from your doctor, your local public health department or an urgent care center. A flu shot can keep you from getting sick. It also will stop the spread of the flu virus to others.

If you cannot get a flu shot, **talk to your doctor about anti-viral medications.** Antivirals can shorten the course or severity of the flu if they are taken at the first signs of illness.

There are some **other things you can do to stay well** and not spread the flu virus.

- Stay away from people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- Stay home from work, school and errands if you are sick. You will help keep others from getting sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue, if one is handy. Throw it away immediately after use. Otherwise, use your upper sleeve.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.