

FLU



What is it?

- Influenza - commonly called the flu
- Highly contagious infection of the respiratory tract (nose, throat, airways, and lungs) caused by the influenza virus
- Begin more suddenly and are more severe than the common cold
- Severe symptoms usually last 3-7 days while fatigue & weakness may persist for weeks.

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Fever	Less Common < 100F	Sudden Onset > 100F
Headache	Mild or Absent	Prominent
Muscle Aches	Mild or Absent	Prominent
Fatigue / Weakness	Mild	Prominent
Runny Nose / Congestion	Common	Common
Cough	Mild, Sneezing	Common, dry hacking at onset
Diarrhea / Vomiting	Rare	Rare, except in younger populations
Sore Throat	Often	Sometimes

How is it transmitted?

- Tiny droplets of the flu virus are released into the air and inhaled by others when the infected person sneezes or coughs
- It can also be spread by direct contact with an infected person's secretions

How is it treated?

- Vaccinations are the most effective way to PREVENT the flu
- **Cannot be cured with antibiotics**
- Antivirals taken within 48 hours of getting sick may reduce severity & duration of symptoms. They can also make you less contagious to others.

What you need to treat your symptoms?

- Congestion
 - Decongestants that contain **Pseudoephedrine** (found behind the counter at pharmacies)
 - Saline Nasal Sprays
- Runny Nose, Sneezing
 - Antihistamines (Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec)
- Cough
 - Cough syrups/tablets that contain both **Dextromethorphan** and **Guaifenesin** to help suppress a dry cough and loosen mucus
- Sore Throat
 - Salt water gargle – gargle every 2 hours with a ½ teaspoon of salt dissolved in ½ cup warm water
 - Throat lozenges & cough drops to moisten your throat
- Fever, Headache, Body Aches
 - Pain Relievers – Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Advil)



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Seek Healthcare If...

- Symptoms last longer than 7 days without improvement
- If you develop new symptoms such as shortness of breath, earache, or cough that produces an increasing amount of mucus
- Extreme thirst, dark urine, and infrequent urination – signs of dehydration

How to Stay Healthy

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water and use hand sanitizers if soap and water are not available
- Eat a healthy diet
- Get at least 8 hours of sleep a day
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water or juice a day
- Exercise several times a week
- Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose, & eyes



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