



Flu is a **serious contagious** disease that can lead to **hospitalization** and even **death**.



## Flu symptoms can include:

- fever\* or feeling feverish/chills
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle and body aches
- headaches
- fatigue (tiredness)
- sometimes diarrhea and vomiting, though this is more common in children than adults

\*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) or call **800-CDC-INFO**.

Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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**FIGHT FLU**

CDC Says  
**"Take 3"**  
**Actions**  
To Fight Flu



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# CDC urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (flu):

## #1

### Take time to get a flu vaccine.

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important action to protect against flu and its potentially serious complications. During 2020-2021, getting a flu vaccine will be more important than ever.
- Flu vaccination has been shown to:
  - » Reduce the risk of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and even the risk of flu-related death.
  - » Prevent serious medical events associated with diabetes and heart and lung disease. For example, flu vaccination can lower the risk of having a heart attack in people with heart disease.
  - » Protect women from flu during and after pregnancy and protecting their babies from flu after birth for several months.
  - » Flu vaccination has been shown in several studies to reduce severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get sick.
  - » Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you from flu, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain chronic health conditions.
- By reducing the burden of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths on the healthcare system, getting a flu vaccine can help to conserve scarce medical resources for the care of people with COVID-19.
- While there are many different flu viruses, flu vaccines protect against the three or four viruses that research suggests will be most common. Flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19.
- Everyone 6 months and older should get an annual flu vaccine annually by the end of October, but vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.
  - » People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with certain chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older. Many people at higher risk from flu also seem to be at higher risk from COVID-19.



## #2

### Take everyday preventive actions to help reduce the spread of germs.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit your contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- 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 an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.
- For flu, CDC recommends that people stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Fever should be gone without the need to use a fever-reducing medicine. The stay-at-home guidance for COVID-19 may be different.
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments or public health departments may recommend additional precautions be taken in your community. Follow those instructions.



## #3

### Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

- If you get sick with flu, antiviral drugs can be used to treat your illness. Flu antiviral drugs are not designed to treat COVID-19.
- Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) and are not available over-the-counter.
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For people with high risk factors, treatment with an antiviral drug can mean the difference between having a milder illness versus a very serious illness that could result in a hospital stay.
- CDC recommends prompt treatment for people who have influenza infection or suspected influenza infection and who are at high risk of serious flu complications.
- Studies show that flu antiviral drugs work best for treatment when they are started within 2 days of getting sick, but starting them later can still be helpful, especially if the sick person has a high risk factor or is very sick from flu.
- If you are at higher risk from flu and get flu symptoms, call your health care provider early so you can be treated with flu antivirals if needed. Follow your doctor's instructions for taking this drug.

