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

## Flu-like symptoms include:

- fever
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- fatigue

Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

For more information, visit **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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# CDC Says "Take 3" Actions To Fight The 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 (the flu):

## #1 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, the flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as this season's vaccines are available.
- 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 chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to high risk people.
- Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for them should be vaccinated instead.

## #2 Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- While sick, limit 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 the flu.

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

- If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness.
- 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 can also prevent serious flu complications, like penumonia.
- It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early to treat people who are very sick with the flu (for example, people who are in the hospital) and people who are sick with the flu and have a greater chance of getting serious flu complications, either because of their age or because they have a high risk medical condition. Other people also may be treated with antiviral drugs by their doctor this season. Most otherwise-healthy people who get the flu, however, do not need to be treated with antiviral drugs.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.