

Influenza Home Care

What is the flu?

Flu, also called influenza, is a contagious viral disease that affects the lungs and airways. Influenza viruses are easily spread from person to person in tiny droplets.

What to do if you or a household member is sick

Influenza can spread when a person infected with an influenza virus speaks, coughs, and/or sneezes and sends the flu virus into the air. The virus can enter the nose, throat, and lungs of another person and begins to multiply. People can also become infected by touching a contaminated surface, then touching their nose or mouth.

Symptoms Associated with Flu

Fever $>100^{\circ}\text{F}$ plus at least two of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Cough
- Chills
- Stomach & Intestinal Discomfort
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose
- Loss of Appetite
- Body Aches
- Fatigue
- Chest pain



Home treatment for influenza

If you or someone in your family has influenza, get lots of rest and drink plenty of liquids (i.e. water, soups, juices or sports drinks, avoid alcohol). You can purchase over-the-counter medication to relieve flu symptoms. In some cases a doctor or other health care professional may prescribe anti-viral drugs to help treat the flu. Antibiotics ***DO NOT*** cure the flu.

Items to Always Keep on Hand

- Over-the-counter medication for treatment of symptoms for minor illnesses, cold and flu
- Mask (follow manufacturer's instructions)
- Thermometer
- Fluid (soup, broth, electrolyte replacement)

Additional information is available online at:

www.cdhd.idaho.gov
www.pandemicflu.gov
www.handyhygiene.org/
www.ready.gov



Home Treatment for Influenza

Monitor flu symptoms

You can keep a flu home care log to monitor your symptoms. Write down the date, time, temperature, other flu symptoms, medication given, and dosage. Make a new entry every four hours or when symptoms change.

Prevent dehydration by giving adequate amounts of liquids at the first sign of flu. Have plenty of ice, water, and light easily digestible foods such as soups or broth available. You can reduce a high temperature with fever-reducing medication and/or relieve discomfort by giving a sponge bath with lukewarm water.

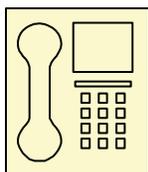
Call your doctor or a health care professional if your family member has:

- A fever greater than 103° F
- Chills
- Coughing that produces thick mucus
- Excessive thirst or other signs of dehydration (feeling of dry mouth)
- An existing medical condition that has been made worse by the flu
- Irritability and/or confusion
- Stiff neck

Most health care professionals can tell you how to treat most symptoms over the phone.

Call 911 for any of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing or chest pain with each breath
- Bluish skin
- Inability to move an arm or leg
- First-time seizure



Important Contact Information:

Influenza Home Care Log

	Date	Time	Temperature	Symptoms	Type of Medication and dose given
DAY 1					
DAY 2					
DAY 3					
DAY 4					
DAY 5					

NOTES:

Stop the Spread of Influenza

Getting an annual influenza vaccine, known as the “flu shot” anytime during flu season can help you prevent flu.

To protect yourself and others in your home:

- Keep personal items separated (household members should avoid sharing computers, pens, paper, clothes, towels, sheets, blankets, food, and eating utensils).
- Disinfect doorknobs, switches, handles, toys, and other surfaces that are commonly touched around the home.
- Wear disposable gloves when in contact with or cleaning up body fluids.
- Make one person the caregiver (he or she may benefit from wearing a mask, follow manufacture instructions)
- Follow precautionary measures and avoid hand-face contact with infectious body fluid to reduce the chance of making the caregiver sick or ill.

Healthy habits can prevent flu illness in yourself and others:

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- Keep an alcohol-based hand sanitizer handy for times when soap and water aren't available.
- Wash your hands after touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.



COVER YOUR COUGH AND SNEEZE

- Use a tissue and throw it away. Then, wash your hands. (Use your upper sleeve, if you don't have a tissue.)
- If you're coughing and sneezing, or if close contacts (i.e. family, friends, etc.) are ill, stay at least three feet away from others.

IF YOU HAVE THE FLU, STAY HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS

- Stay home from work or school.
- Avoid running errands to reduce your contact with others.
- Consider wearing a surgical mask when around others. Do not share masks, and follow re-use directions on package.

