

Flu Information

What is the Flu?

- Influenza, or the flu, is a respiratory illness caused by a virus that is easily spread.

How is it spread?

- This virus is spread person to person when someone with the flu coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- Touching an object with the virus on it, and then touching your nose or mouth may also spread it.

Symptoms

- Fever/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea (more common in children)
- Someone with the flu will feel some or all of the above symptoms. Symptoms usually come on quickly and may last up to 2 weeks.
- The flu can cause severe symptoms. These can result in hospitalization or even death. Children under age 5 and those with certain medical conditions are at a greater risk of having complications from the flu.

Complications

The flu can cause other health problems. This may include:

- Pneumonia or bronchitis
- Ear or sinus infections
- Dehydration
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions such as heart failure, asthma, and diabetes.

Flu Season

Flu season can start in October and last until March. No one can predict when outbreaks will happen and how severe the flu will be.

Flu vs. Cold

It can be hard to tell if you have a cold or the flu. Both are respiratory illnesses but are caused by different viruses. Flu often causes more severe symptoms of fever, body aches, tiredness, and cough. The flu is more likely to cause complications.

Protect Your Family

What are my options?

Flu Mist - This is a nasal spray that protects against 4 different flu viruses. It is approved for healthy children 2 years old and older.

Flu Shot - This is an injected vaccine that protects against the flu. The flu shot is approved for children 6 months old and older.

Ask your Healthcare Provider

Ask your healthcare provider for more information on what options are available. You can decide together on how to best protect your family this flu season.

Get Vaccinated!

Is the Flu Vaccine Safe?

- The flu vaccine is very safe. It is the best way to protect your child from serious flu problems.
- Side effects from the flu shot are soreness, redness or swelling where the shot was given.
- A side effect from the flu mist is nasal stuffiness.
- The flu shot and the flu mist cannot give you the flu. The flu shot contains killed virus. The flu mist contains a weak form of the flu virus.
- It's OK to Ask your healthcare provider the questions you have about the flu vaccine.

Tips for this Flu Season:

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Disinfect surfaces in your home especially when someone is sick.
- Avoid touching your face. This is an easy way to spread germs.
- Keep a sick child home from school or daycare while they have a fever. They can go back when their fever is gone for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine.
- Get your entire family vaccinated. Keep those too young to get vaccinated away from sick people as much as possible!

For more information visit the following websites:

www.cdc.gov

www.michigan.gov/flu