

What is the flu (influenza)?

A virus typically seen from November to April causes the flu. It is spread from person to person by coughing or sneezing. People can get sick 3-4 days after becoming exposed to the flu. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu shot or nasal spray and to avoid contact with people who are already ill.

Who should get the flu vaccine?

Anyone can get the vaccine, but is very recommended for the following groups:

- Anyone on long term aspirin therapy
- Children aged 6 months and older and people over 50 years of age
- People with chronic health problems
- Healthcare workers
- Pregnant women in their second or third trimester

Consult with your doctor if:

- Your fever lasts more than one week
- You have trouble breathing or heart problems with other serious health problems
- You have an autoimmune disease such as cancer or HIV/AIDS
- You feel sick and don't seem to be getting better
- You have a cough that begins to produce phlegm

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, (Temp. 100-102°F); lasts three to four days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General Aches, Pains	Slight	Usual; Often Severe
Fatigue, Weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to two to three weeks
Extreme Exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent

Stuffy Nose/Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Chest Discomfort, Cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can be severe