



Fight the Flu

It starts with you

Caring for a Sick Person at Home

Most cases of the flu are treated at home with rest, over the counter remedies for symptoms and plenty of liquids. Special precautions are necessary if you are taking care of a sick person at home, especially if the person is an infant or child. Get vaccinated for both seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu once it becomes available. Despite precautions, people will get the flu this season.

Here's a simple guide on how to treat them at home:

1. Ask your family's healthcare provider:
 - If any special care that might be needed, especially if the person is pregnant or has a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema.
 - Ask whether the patient should take antiviral medications.
2. Keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible, especially others who are at high risk of complications from influenza.
3. Remind the patient to cover coughs, and clean his/her hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after coughing and/or sneezing.
4. Remind EVERYONE in the household to clean their hands often, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY:

If the sick person or persons:

- Has difficulty breathing or chest pain
- Has purple or blue discoloration of the lips
- Is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down
- Shows signs of dehydration, such as feeling dizzy when standing, being unable to urinate, or (in infants) crying without shedding tears
- Has seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions), or
- Is less responsive than normal or becomes confused

For more detailed information on home care and other flu updates: visit <http://www.flu.gov>