

Flu Fact Sheet for Parents

What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs that is caused by influenza virus. The flu can spread from person to person. Most people with flu are sick for about a week, but then feel better. However, some people (especially young children, pregnant women, older people, and people with chronic health problems) can get very sick and some can die.

Flu symptoms

Most people with the flu feel tired and have fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and sore muscles. Some people, especially children, may also have stomach problems and diarrhea. Cough can last two or more weeks.

What is the flu pandemic?

A flu pandemic means a worldwide outbreak of the disease.

How Does Seasonal Flu Differ from Pandemic Flu?

Season Flu	Pandemic Flu
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Occurs every year usually in winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Occurs rarely (three times in the 20th century)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Affects up to about 10% of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">May affect around 25% of the population
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For most people it is an unpleasant but not life-threatening infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It could be a more serious infection for everyone
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual vaccination is available for those at risk of serious illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vaccine probably would not be available in the early stages of a pandemic

How can I protect my family and myself?

- Ask about a flu shot
- Wash hands often (for 20 seconds)
- Cover your cough and sneeze with tissue or sleeve
- Stay home if you feel sick
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes
- **Practice Healthy Habits!** Eat healthy, get plenty of rest, and exercise regularly