

# INFLUENZA: THE FLU

## Home Care Instructions

- **Drink plenty of fluids:** water, juice, and warm soup (especially chicken soup) to prevent dehydration. A good rule is to drink enough so that you urinate your normal amount.
- **Get plenty of rest.**
- **Wash your hands often**
- **Stay home** until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or chills. Be sure the fever isn't being hidden by fever-reducing medication (such as ibuprofen).

### *Fever*

- Temp above 98.6 F
- Limit activities and REST as much as possible
- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration and replace electrolytes (Gatorade is a good option)
- Monitor and record temp as symptoms change

### *-Antibiotics*

- Complete full course of prescribed medication

### *-Medications*

- For fever/aches & pain/inflammation:
  - Tylenol (Acetaminophen) 325mg: 1-2 tabs every 4hrs as needed (do not exceed more than 4000mg in a 24hr period)
  - Motrin/Advil (Ibuprofen)200mg: 1-2 tabs every 6hrs as needed

## Symptoms

- Fever 100F or higher or feeling feverish and/or Chills
- Cough and/or sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headache and/or body aches
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

## WARNING SIGNS:

### When to seek Medical Attention

- Fever 101F or above
- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Difficulty breathing/Shortness of breath
- Pain or Pressure to Chest
- Confusion
- Severe/Persistent Vomiting
- Seizures
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

### Patient Education: Prevention

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Then throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- One of the best ways to avoid the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. Viruses that cause the flu change from year to year. For that reason, doctors recommend getting the flu vaccine each fall or winter. Most often, the vaccine is given as a shot. But some people may receive the vaccine in nasal spray form instead. Your doctor can tell you which vaccine is right for you.
- Wash your hands often.
- Carry an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60 percent alcohol. Use it when you don't have access to soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- At home and work, clean phones, computer keyboards/electronics often with disinfectant wipes.

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## For Your Information

- Influenza (“the flu”) is an infection that affects your respiratory tract (the mouth, nose, and lungs, and the passages between them). Unlike a cold, the flu can make you very ill.
- The flu is caused by viruses. The viruses spread in the air through droplets when someone who has the flu virus coughs, sneezes, laughs, talks, etc. One can become infected by inhaling virus germs directly; or when by touching a surface where a virus droplet has landed and then transferring the germ by touching eyes, nose or mouth. Touching used tissues, or sharing utensils, drinking glasses, or a toothbrush with an infected person can expose you to flu germs, too.
- The Scoop on Chicken Soup: Chicken soup may help Flu/cold symptoms in more than one way:
  - Inhaling the steam can ease nasal congestion
  - Sipping spoonfuls of fluid can help avoid dehydration
  - Some say that the soup may even help soothe inflammation. Researchers have found chicken soup has anti-inflammatory properties in the lab, though it’s unclear whether this effect translates to real-world colds.