

# 'TIS THE SEASON...

## Not so fun facts:

- Flu activity most commonly peaks in the U.S. in January or February
- People infected with flu may be able to infect others **beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick**
- In a typical year, approximately 5 to 20 percent of the population gets seasonal flu. Flu-related deaths range from 3,000 to 48,600 (average 23,600)
- Each year, between 5% and 20% of Americans get the flu and miss a staggering 70 million work days as a result



## WHAT IS THE FLU?

Influenza (also known as the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The flu is different from a cold. The flu usually comes on suddenly. People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)

### Know the FLU

<b>F</b>	<b>FEVER</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>ACHES</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>CHILLS</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>TIREDNESS</b>
<b>S</b>	<b><u>SUDDEN ONSET</u></b>

Most people who get influenza will recover in a few days to less than two weeks, but some people will develop complications.

Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus and ear infections are examples of complications from flu. The flu can make chronic health problems such as asthma and cardiovascular disease worse. **VISIT YOUR DOCTOR!**

An annual seasonal flu vaccine (either the flu shot or the nasal-spray flu vaccine) is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>

# HOW DO I REDUCE MY CHANCES OF GETTING THE FLU?



- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact.

- Wash every time you blow your nose or cough into your hand. Also wash or use sanitizer after:
  - shaking hands with someone (Tip: try to avoid it, it benefits you both!)
  - borrow a pen (Tip: carry your own pen with you everywhere you go!)
  - using stairway handrails, doorknobs, or elevator buttons
  - using someone else's phone or keyboard
- Wipe down your own phones, countertops, and keyboards with a disinfectant wipe frequently.
- Stay home when you are sick! The loss of productivity from one person staying home is much less than if the entire office gets sick.
- Practice other good health habits: Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

## What if I get the flu?

- Drink clear fluids, such as water, broth or sports drinks.
- Rest as long as you continue to feel tired, and sleep as much as you can.
- If you think you have the flu, call your doctor. He might want to prescribe flu medication, which must be taken within 48 hours of the first flu symptoms. These medications can decrease the duration and severity of the flu by one to two days if used within this early time period.
- Call the doctor if you have certain chronic medical conditions, including asthma, emphysema, heart disease, diabetes, neuromuscular disease, and kidney, liver or blood disease, or if you are pregnant.
- The CDC recommends that workers who have a fever and respiratory symptoms stay at home until 24 hours after their fever ends (100° or lower), without the use of medication. Not everyone who has the flu will have a fever.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) to reduce fever and muscle aches.

