

What are the symptoms of influenza?

- Chills, shivering and fever (temperature over 38 degrees Celsius)
- Headache
- Muscle aches and pains
- Sore throat
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Sneezing
- Dry cough
- Tiredness
- Trouble breathing



If you experience any of these symptoms, you should avoid contact with other people wherever possible. If you are concerned about your symptoms, or they become worse, you should seek medical advice immediately. It is especially important to get medical advice early in the course of illness in children, and in people who have certain chronic medical conditions. Your doctor will be able to advise if you have a chronic condition which puts you at particular risk of the complications of influenza.

Never give aspirin, or medications containing aspirin, to children or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms, particularly fever, without first speaking to your doctor. Paracetamol should be used as an alternative to reduce fever.

Remember, while cold and flu medications may relieve the symptoms, you are still capable of passing on the infection and should avoid contact with other people.

Why should I worry about the flu?

Although most people recover from the flu quickly, some people such as young children, older people and people with certain health conditions can be seriously affected by the flu, which can sometimes even result in death.

Flu vaccination can be administered to anyone who wishes to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with influenza. Annual vaccination is recommended for people who are at increased risk of flu related complications, including all people 65 years and older. The flu vaccine is free for all Australians aged 65 and older. Free flu vaccine is also available for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 50 years and over, or aged 15 to 49 years with specific risk factors.

If you are concerned that you may be at risk please consult your GP or ask your pharmacist.

Further Information:

For further information on influenza visit the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's website at www.health.gov.au/fluandyou or freecall **1800 004 599**



**the
flu
and
you**

**Help stop
the spread ...
at home, work
and school**

One of the most effective ways to protect you, your friends and family from influenza (the flu) is to practise good personal hygiene.

This brochure provides information on how simple practices like washing your hands regularly, covering coughs and sneezes, not sharing personal items, cleaning surfaces around your home and work, and staying at home if unwell can prevent the spread of flu.

Five simple ways to prevent the spread of influenza



1. Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough

The flu virus can travel through the air when a person coughs or sneezes. When you cough or sneeze you should turn away from other people and, where possible, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve. Remember to wash your hands as soon as possible afterwards.

Where possible, use disposable tissues rather than a handkerchief, which could store the virus, and always put the used tissue into the nearest bin, rather than a pocket or handbag.



2. Wash your hands

Washing your hands regularly even when they aren't visibly dirty is the single most effective way of killing the flu virus. Alcohol based hand products are an alternative to soap and water.

Always wash your hands:

- after you've been to the toilet
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- after being in contact with someone who has a cold or flu
- before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth and
- before preparing food and eating.



1 Wet your hands, then apply soap



2 Lather vigorously for 15– 20 seconds



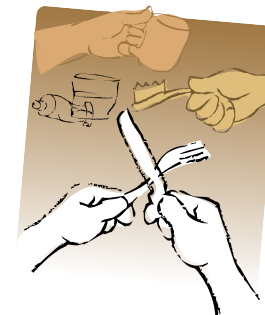
3 Rinse with water



4 Dry your hands afterwards with a clean towel

3. Don't share personal items

The flu virus can spread when someone touches an object with the virus on it and then touches their face.



If a member of your household has the flu:

- keep their personal items, such as towels, bedding and toothbrushes separate; and
- do not share eating and drinking utensils, food or drinks.

4. Clean surfaces

Flu viruses can live on surfaces for a number of hours. You should regularly clean surfaces such as tables, benches and fridge doors with soap and water or detergent.



5. Avoid close contact with others

Keeping your distance from others (at least 1 metre apart) when you are feeling unwell will help reduce the chances of spreading the flu virus to other people.

Avoid going out in public when you are sick. If you have the flu, you should remain at home while you are unwell and have a fever. You should not go to work or school or attend other public gatherings and avoid taking public transport.

