

## "For Safety's Sake - Do Something"

### Flu Season is Still Upon Us



Flu season is starting to wind down, however it is still going strong in some areas. This year's flu viruses are especially harmful to those persons over 65 and children under 4 years of age. The best way to protect against the flu virus is to get a flu vaccine each year.

**What is the flu?** The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Flu can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to hospitalization or even death.

**How can it spread?** The flu virus can spread person to person when infected persons cough, sneeze, or even talk within about 6 feet of others. Less often, a person may get the flu by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.

**What is the difference between a cold and the flu?** The flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. These two types of illnesses have similar symptoms and it can be difficult to tell the difference between them. In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder than the flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations. Flu can have very serious associated complications.

**How can you tell the difference between a cold and the flu?** Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can tell if a person has the flu.

**What are the symptoms of the flu versus the symptoms of a cold?** The symptoms of flu can include fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue (tiredness). Cold symptoms are usually milder than the symptoms of flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose.



#### Help protect yourself and others by:

Washing your hands often

Use hand sanitizer

Don't share eating utensils and drinking glasses

Cover that cough and sneeze

**Stay home when you are sick**

**For more information, visit:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm>