

# INFLUENZA

Influenza, commonly called the flu, is a viral infection that attacks the respiratory system (nose, throat and lungs).

Influenza viruses are spread from person-to-person by exposure to infectious droplets pushed out into the air by sneezing or coughing. These droplets are then breathed in, or can get into the body through touching hands or surfaces where the virus is present.

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## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS



- Fever
- Aching muscles
- Headache
- Cough
- Fatigue and weakness
- Nasal congestion
- Sore throat
- Chills and sweats

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## PREVENTION TIPS



- Wash or sanitize your hands regularly
- Wear a mask properly (cover nose and mouth)
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when sneezing or coughing
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects, especially when someone is ill
- **Annual vaccination against influenza is the best strategy for preventing disease and severe complications from influenza**

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## PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK FOR SEVERE INFLUENZA ILLNESS WHO SHOULD GET THE FLU VACCINE EACH YEAR ARE



- Elderly ( $\geq 65$  years old)
- Pregnant and post-partum women
- People living with HIV
- People with tuberculosis
- People with chronic diseases like diabetes, asthma, heart, kidney or liver disease
- Persons who are morbidly obese (i.e. body mass-index  $\geq 40$ )
- Young children (6 months to  $< 5$  years old)

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## COMPLICATIONS

Seasonal influenza is usually not serious to young and healthy people but complications can uncommonly occur. Complications are more common in people at high risk.

Complications of flu include:

- Pneumonia / lung infection
- Bronchitis
- Ear infection
- Heart problems



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