

Are You Ready for Flu Season?



It's important to stay vigilant against illnesses like Influenza, also known as the flu, which can threaten our health and well-being. The flu is a highly contagious illness occurring most often in the winter months¹, and anyone can get it. It can be especially serious for children, the elderly and the chronically ill. Getting an annual vaccine is the best way to help prevent it.

What are the symptoms?²

The flu causes a fever, body aches, a headache, a dry cough, and a sore or dry throat. You will probably feel tired and less hungry than usual. The symptoms usually are the worst for the first 3 or 4 days, but it can take 1 to 2 weeks to get completely better.

It usually takes 1 to 4 days to get symptoms of the flu after you have been around someone who has the virus.

Certain people are at higher risk of problems from the flu including young children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with long-term illnesses or with impaired immune systems that make it hard to fight infections.

Possible problems from the flu:³

Most people get better without problems. But sometimes the flu can lead to other issues.

- **Pneumonia**, which is an infection of the lungs. It rarely causes death in young, healthy people. But it can often be life-threatening in older adults, people who have other diseases, and pregnant women.

- **Bronchiolitis**. This is an inflammation of the small air passages. It affects infants and is the leading cause of serious lower respiratory illness.
- **Sinusitis**. This means the mucous membranes that line the inside of the nose and facial sinuses become infected and inflamed.
- **Croup**. Croup is a swelling or blockage in the windpipe. It causes hoarseness, a barking cough, a high-pitched sound when breathing in, and trouble breathing.
- **Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)** symptoms may get worse.
- **Inflammation** of the heart muscle, the sac around the heart, or other muscles.



[Learn more about the flu](#)

1. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, <http://www.nfid.org/influenza>. Updated August 2022.

2. Cigna, Influenza (Seasonal Flu), <https://www.cigna.com/knowledge-center/hw/medical-topics/influenza-hw122012>. Updated March 9, 2022.

3. Cigna, Flu Complications, <https://www.cigna.com/knowledge-center/hw/flu-complications-hw121734>. Updated February 9, 2022.



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