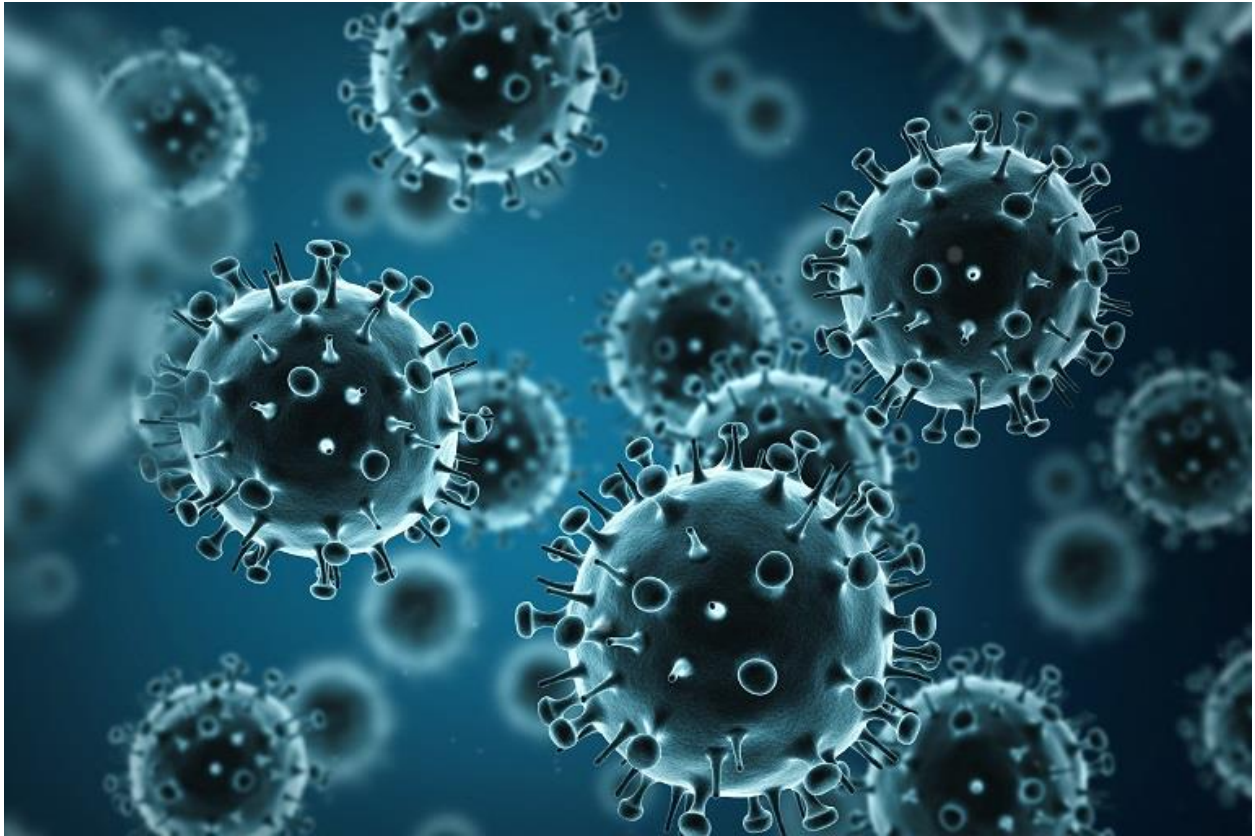




FLU SEASON

This guide will help you navigate through this harsh
flu season

OVERVIEW



Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Some people, such as people 65 years and older, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk of serious flu complications.

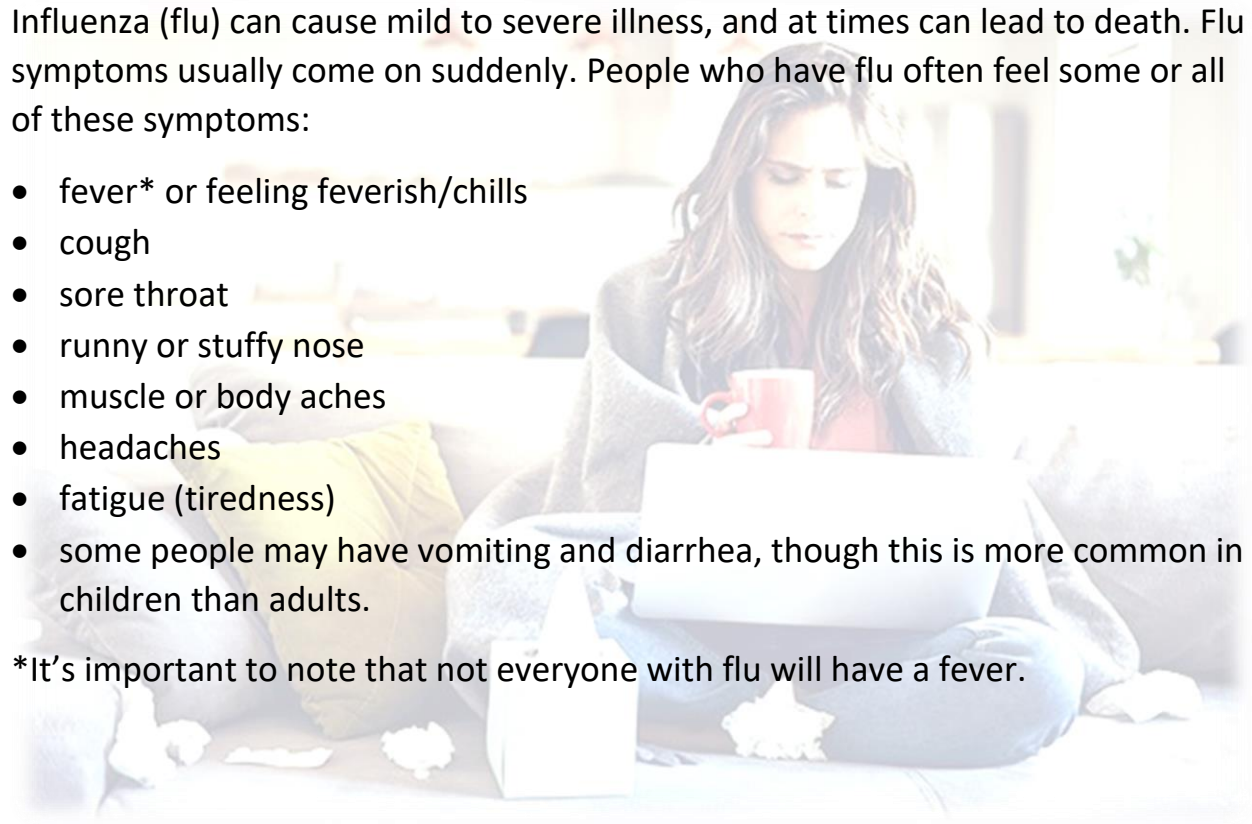
While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses are detected year-round, flu viruses typically circulate during these times. This flu season could be the worst we've seen in a decade.

COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Influenza (flu) can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Flu symptoms usually come on suddenly. People who have 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)
- some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.



HOW FLU SPREADS



People with flu can spread it to others. Most experts think that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (usually within about 6 feet away) or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a person might get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

When Are People with Flu Contagious?

Flu viruses can be detected in most infected persons beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five to seven days after becoming sick. People with flu are most contagious in the first three to four days after their illness begins. However, infants and people with weakened immune systems who are infected with flu viruses may be contagious for longer than seven days.

Symptoms typically begin about two days (but can range from one to four days) after flu viruses infect a person's respiratory tract. It is theoretically possible that before symptoms begin, an infected person can spread flu viruses to their close contacts. Some people can be infected with flu viruses and have no symptoms but may still be able to spread the virus to their close contacts.

GUIDE

The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated every year.

The Do's and The Don'ts When Returning To Work

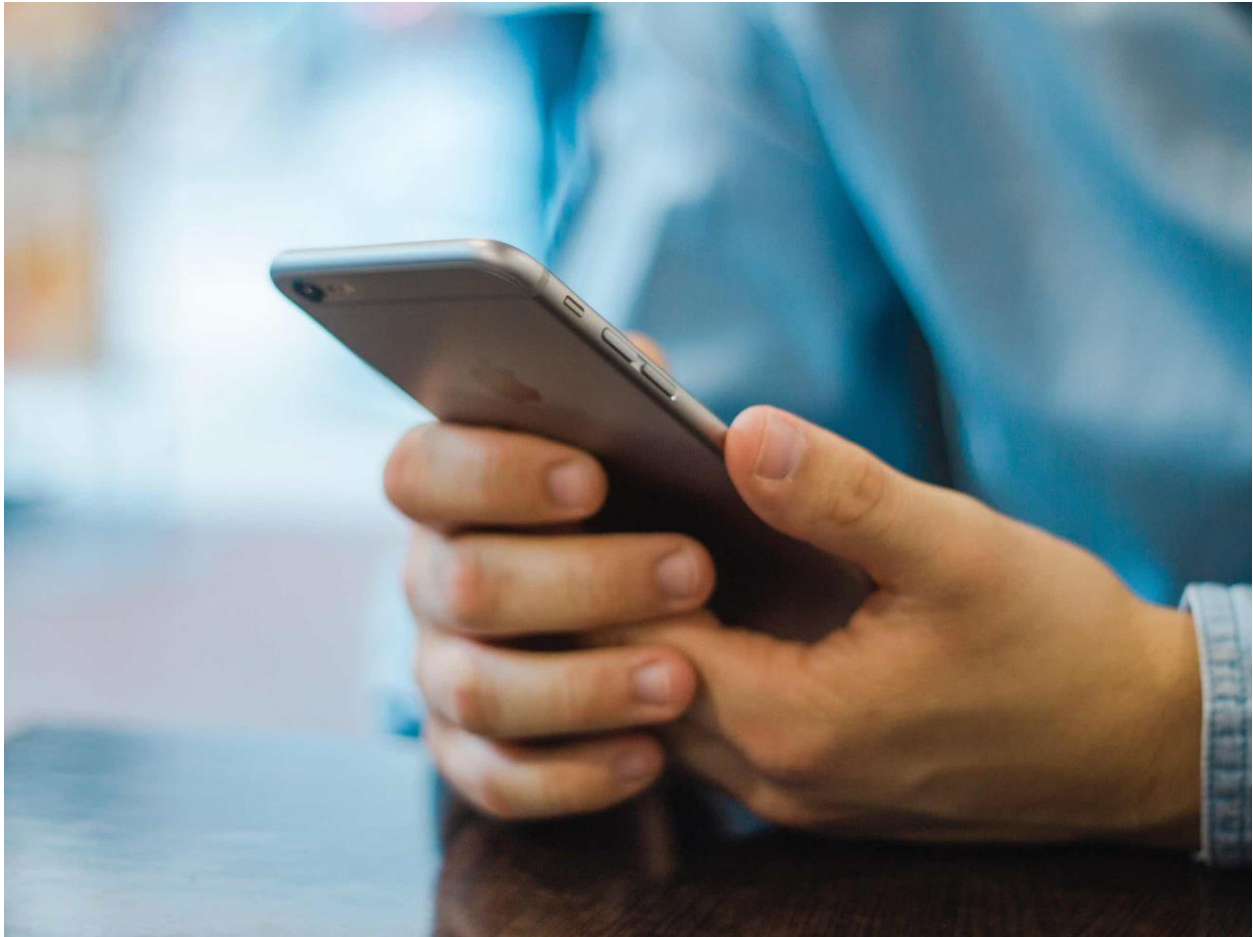
The Do's

-  Do maintain good personal hygiene
-  Do wash your hands with soap and water
-  Do cover your mouth while coughing, sneezing, and yawning
-  Do clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer
-  Do see a doctor if you are feeling sick

The Don't's

-  Don't touch coworkers' belongings
-  Don't forget to wash your hands when switching tasks
-  Don't have contact with live animals or raw/under cooked meat
-  Don't go to work if you are having symptoms such as fever and cough
-  Don't touch high traffic areas with your hands

Cellphone Flu



You get your text messages, emails, and phone calls on it, but did you know your cell phone can also help you catch the flu?



Cell phones can carry as many germs or more than a bathroom door handle or toilet seat. **Just one phone, in fact, can harbor thousands of colonies of germs and bacteria.** One of the most common bacteria colonies is coliform, which indicates fecal contamination.

Many germs found on phones cause infections. Germs, such as coliform, found on phones, tablets and phone cases have been linked to causing the flu, pink eye, diarrhea and acne. **Try to minimize the number of times you touch your phone or tablet, and then touch your face or eyes.**





Transferring germs through your phone is easy. Many parents have children wash their hands before and after meals and using the bathroom. However, they'll let kids use a smart device and not think twice about disinfecting or washing hands. Children are much more vulnerable to germs, and may also spread germs picked up from school or daycare when using mobile devices.

We use wrong things to clean our phone. You'll often wipe your phone on your clothes to clean the screen, but **alcohol is best for cleaning a phone and can remove up to 100 percent of germs from the surface.** Although some may use a damp towel to wipe phones, it is not as effective. Some bacteria are resistant to low-grade cleaners. To avoid water damage, never spray your devices or use liquid for cleaning. First spray a towel with disinfectant, or use a disinfecting wipe.



We use our phone in public places, such as gyms, restaurants, bars, and offices. These places have surfaces that are touched by many people throughout the day. Although you may wash your hands, that may have been after already transferring germs to the surface of your phone.

Phones are used very frequently during the day. **Smart phone users can check their phones average of 150 times during a normal day**, which can leave a lot of germs behind on the screen and buttons.



We use our phone in the wrong places. Avoid using your phone in restrooms. This is where fecal germs and other bacteria can most easily be transferred. Only use your phone once you've washed your hands and left the restroom.

Food-borne bacteria can stick on the screen. Salmonella is also one of the highest-ranked bacteria found on phones. If you use your phone or tablet during cooking or meal prep, be sure to disinfect it immediately to reduce lingering bacteria that could make you sick, or be transferred to other places.



Sometimes we just have to take the call. Go hands-free! Instead of handling your phone regularly, try using a Bluetooth hands-free device, especially when you're sick. Also avoid sharing your phone with people who are sick, or disinfect the surface of your phone and case immediately after sharing.

CONCLUSION



Be mindful of flu symptoms:

- Fever or chills (older adults may not have a fever)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children)

Stop the spread of flu with these simple precautions:

- Get a flu shot every year at the start of the flu season in early fall.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or with an alcohol-based hand rub, especially after coughing or sneezing, and before eating.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

If you get the flu

- Visit the nearest flu clinic (one is located at Independence Polyclinic). Your clinic can prescribe an antiviral drug to make the symptoms milder, shorten the time you are sick, and prevent complications from the flu. These medications work best when started early – within 2 days of becoming sick, so visit the clinic as soon as possible.
- Stay home. If you think you might have the flu, stay home for seven days since your symptoms began, or until your symptoms have been gone for 24 hours. This will keep you from spreading the virus to others. [Please be mindful that if you see a doctor, they will prescribe a detailed time that you need to recuperate.](#)
- Get some much-needed rest. To help your body fight the flu, get enough sleep and drink plenty of fluids, such as water, juice, and soup, to prevent dehydration. Because you might be cold one minute and hot the next, wear layers so you can easily add or remove clothes as needed.
- Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Because you might be cold one minute and hot the next, wear layers so you can easily add or remove clothes as needed.
- Follow advice from health officials.