



Keeping U Healthy Keeps LMU Healthy!

Influenza: What You Need to Know:

What is influenza (the flu)? The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Some people, such as older people, young children and people with certain health conditions (such as cancer, heart disease or chronic lung disease), are at high risk for serious flu complications. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year.

How can I protect myself and others from getting the flu?

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

What should I do if I develop flu-like symptoms, such as fever and cough?

- If you are sick with flu-like illness, the Centers for Disease Control recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

When do I need medicine for the flu?

Most people recover without medication, but some people are more likely to get severely ill with the flu. Those at risk include everyone over 65, under 2 or pregnant, and anyone with other long-term health problems, such as asthma or diabetes.

- If you belong to one of these groups and you get come down with symptoms of flu or come into close contact with someone who has the flu, call your health care provider.

When should I go to the emergency room or hospital?

You *don't* need to go the hospital or emergency room unless you have severe symptoms. Severe symptoms include:

- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath (rapid breathing in children)
- Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach
- Bluish skin color
- Dizziness or confusion
- Increasing fever
- Vomiting that won't stop

Questions? Call (423) 869-7193 or email billie.price@lmunet.edu