

# Flu vs. Common Cold

Learn to recognize the symptoms of flu and teach others how to protect themselves from getting or spreading flu.

	Flu	Common Cold
<b>Description</b>	Respiratory illness caused by one of the following viruses: influenza A, influenza B or H1N1 flu	Respiratory illness caused any one of a number of viruses
<b>Possible symptoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Extreme tiredness/fatigue</li> <li>– Fever (generally higher than 100.4°F)</li> <li>– Headache</li> <li>– Dry cough</li> <li>– Sore throat</li> <li>– Runny or stuffy nose</li> <li>– Body aches</li> <li>– Chills</li> <li>– Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children)</li> </ul> <p>Complications resulting from flu include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Bacterial pneumonia</li> <li>– Ear infections (more common in children)</li> <li>– Sinus infections</li> <li>– Dehydration</li> <li>– Worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma and diabetes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Runny nose</li> <li>– Sneezing</li> <li>– Tiredness</li> <li>– Stuffy nose</li> <li>– Mild cough</li> </ul>
<b>How to distinguish</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Symptoms are more intense.</li> <li>– Symptoms can result in more serious health problems, such as pneumonia, hospitalization and death.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Symptoms are milder.</li> <li>– Symptoms do not generally result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections or hospitalization.</li> </ul>
<b>How to prevent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Get vaccinated every fall.</li> <li>– Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.</li> <li>– Stay home when you are sick.</li> <li>– Practice good health habits, such as handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes.</li> <li>– Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.</li> <li>– Disinfect surface areas and linens often.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick.</li> <li>– Stay home when you are sick.</li> <li>– Practice good health habits, such as handwashing and covering coughs and sneezes.</li> <li>– Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.</li> <li>– Disinfect surface areas and linens often.</li> </ul>

# Keep Your Family Healthy During Flu Season

## Get your flu vaccine

- Flu affects everyone, including healthy young people.
- Vaccines are the best way to keep your family from getting sick.
- The flu vaccine is updated every season.
- The 2010-2011 seasonal flu vaccine will contain many strains of flu, including the H1N1 flu.
- The 2010-2011 seasonal flu vaccine is safe and recommended for everyone age 6 months and older.
- Everyone age 6 months and older should get the seasonal flu vaccine beginning in fall of 2010, even if you got a vaccine during the last outbreak.
- Flu vaccines are available as a shot and as a nasal mist. Talk to your doctor about which type is right for you and your family.
- Sooner is better. Immunity can take two to three weeks after vaccination.

## Stay safe

- Make sure your family gets their seasonal flu shot.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth without first washing your hands.
- If a family member gets sick, make sure other family members keep their distance.
- Clean surfaces with an antiviral disinfecting wipe or spray. Surfaces include door knobs, keyboards, tables, etc.

## Handwashing tips

Wet hands with warm running water.

Place soap in palms and rub together vigorously to make a lather for 15 seconds (or the time it takes to sing a verse of *Happy Birthday*).

Rinse soap off hands with warm running water.

If possible, turn the faucet off by using a paper towel. Dry hands with a paper towel—do not dry hands on clothing.

If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer. Wash visibly dirty hands with soap and water if available.

## Stay clean

Wash hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after coughing and sneezing.

## Stay covered

Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw away the tissue after use. Teach your child to cough or sneeze in his elbow when tissue is not available.

## What should I do if I get the flu?

- Stay home until you are fever-free without having to take medicine for at least 24 hours.
- Avoid crowded places, such as school, work, church and shopping areas.
- Drink plenty of cool, clear liquids and get plenty of rest.
- Call your healthcare provider if you have questions.

## Resources

[www.choa.org/flu](http://www.choa.org/flu)

[www.choa.org/tipsheets](http://www.choa.org/tipsheets) (available in English and Spanish)

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

[www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)

## Find a local flu clinic

[www.flu.gov/individualfamily/vaccination/locator.html](http://www.flu.gov/individualfamily/vaccination/locator.html)

