



Salem/Cumberland County Health Department
INFLUENZA
(PUBLIC HANDOUT)

What is the Flu?

Influenza, also known as “the flu”, is a viral infection of the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu usually spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks and the virus is sent into the air.

When does the Flu occur?

- In New Jersey, the flu usually occurs any time between October through early April.
- However, the flu season is the worst during January and February.

Is it a cold or the Flu?

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	rare in adults and older children, but can be as high as 102° F in infants and small children	usually 102° F, but can go up to 104° F and usually lasts 3 to 4 days
Headache	rare	sudden onset and can be severe
Muscle aches	mild	usual, and often severe
Tiredness & Weakness	mild	often extreme, and can last two or more weeks
Extreme exhaustion	never	sudden onset and can be severe
Runny nose	often	sometimes

How soon do the symptoms of the Flu occur?

Symptoms usually start 1 to 3 days after coming in contact with a person that is sick with the flu.



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How is the Flu spread?

- The flu is usually spread person-to-person through the air or through contact.
- The virus is released into the air through the coughing and sneezing of people who are sick. For example: You sneeze, wipe your nose and do not wash your hands immediately.

What should I do if I get the flu?

- Rest and liquids are usually enough, avoid using alcohol and tobacco.
- Stay home!

How long is an infected person able to spread the Flu?

- The time in which a person is able to spread the flu varies
- This is why it is important **to stay home** when you have flu-like symptoms.

How can I prevent myself from getting the Flu?

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Frequent hand washing especially after coughing and sneezing.
- Use tissues when sneezing and dispose of them properly.

**Are there any other methods of preventing the Flu besides getting
a Flu shot?**

A new type of flu vaccine is now available and is sprayed into the nose rather than injected into the muscle. It is called "FluMist".



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Who can get “FluMist”?

“FluMist” is for healthy people between the ages of 5 and 49, including household contacts of most people at high risk for flu complications. However, FluMist should not be used by people with some medical conditions, pregnant women, or others at risk of flu-related complications.

What are the side effects of getting “FluMist”?

- In children, side effects can include:
 - runny nose
 - headache
 - vomiting
 - muscle aches
 - fever
- In adults, side effects can include:
 - runny nose
 - headache
 - sore throat
 - cough

Fever is not a common side effect in adults getting FluMist.

Who should get the Flu shot?

- Children **6 – 23 months of age**.
- People **65 years of age or older**.
- People who live in **long-term care facilities** that have people with medical conditions.



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- People ages 2 – 64 who have **long-term health problems** including:
 - Heart disease
 - Lung cancer
 - Asthma
 - Kidney disease
 - Metabolic disease, such as diabetes
 - Anemia, and other blood disorders
- People 6 months to 18 years of age on **long-term aspirin treatment**.
- **Pregnant women**
- Healthcare worker with direct patient care.
- Out of home care caregivers and household contacts of children 6 months and younger.

Are there any side effects of the Flu shot?

Most people will feel no side effects from the flu shot.

- The virus in the vaccine is dead, so you can not get influenza.
- Some mild side effects: soreness and redness where shot was given, fever and body aches.

Are there any other methods of preventing the Flu besides getting a Flu shot?

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Frequent hand washing especially after coughing and sneezing.
- Use tissues when sneezing and dispose of them properly.

*** If you are sick with the flu, stay home! ***