



MID-DEL HEALTH NEWS

Mid-Del Schools are Safe, Challenged and Ready!

FLU FACTS

What are the symptoms of flu?

Flu can range from a very mild to serious illness. Symptoms of the flu usually come on suddenly. Symptoms may include fever of 100°F to 103°F (possibly higher in small children), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and extreme tiredness. Less often nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea can also occur, especially in children, however these symptoms are usually not the main problem. The term “stomach flu” is sometimes used to describe a different type of stomach illness (with symptoms of diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting), but this is not the same as seasonal flu.

How is flu spread?

Flu is spread from person to person by respiratory (nose and throat) droplets released into the air by talking, coughing, sneezing, laughing, or singing. Touching an object that has flu virus on it, and then touching one’s own eyes, nose, or mouth can also spread flu. The flu virus can “live” on some surfaces for up to 24 hours. Most healthy adults can infect others from one day before symptoms are present and up to seven days after becoming sick. Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.

How soon after exposure do symptoms start? How long will symptoms last?

The time from being exposed to the flu to the first sign of symptoms can be from one to five days. Most people who have flu recover completely in one to two weeks, but sometimes the illness can cause other infections like pneumonia.

How do you know if you have flu?

The only way to know for sure is to visit your healthcare provider. They may do a rapid lab test for flu, or they may diagnose flu based on your symptoms with evidence that flu virus has been found in your surrounding area. A rapid test for flu may be performed in an outpatient clinic.

What can be done to control or prevent flu?

From the CDC’s “Take 3” campaign to fight the flu, steps to take are:

1. Take time to get the flu vaccine. The single best way to prevent the flu is get a flu vaccine. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctor’s visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related complications.
2. Take everyday preventative actions to stop the spread of germs.
3. Take antiviral flu medications if prescribed by your healthcare provider. These medications can make your flu illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They can also help prevent serious complications from flu. You are still contagious even with the use of medication, so follow the advice from your physician or school nurse regarding staying home when sick.

Preventative Measures

- ⇒ **Covering your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when sneezing or coughing and disposing of those used tissues immediately into trash containers. If a tissue is unavailable, coughing and sneezing into inner elbow.**
- ⇒ **Washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing or using a tissue.**
- ⇒ **Using alcohol-based hand sanitizers even if your hands are not visibly soiled.**
- ⇒ **Staying home if you have a fever and not returning to work or school until you are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.**

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