



MID-DEL HEALTH NEWS

Flu Facts

- **What are the symptoms of the flu?** Flu can range from very mild to serious illness. Symptoms of the flu usually come on suddenly. Symptoms may include a 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.

Preventative Measures

- **Covering your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when sneezing or coughing and disposing of those used tissues immediately into trash containers. If a tissue is unavailable, coughing or 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 do not appear visibly soiled.**
- **If you have the flu, please remain home until you have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.**

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