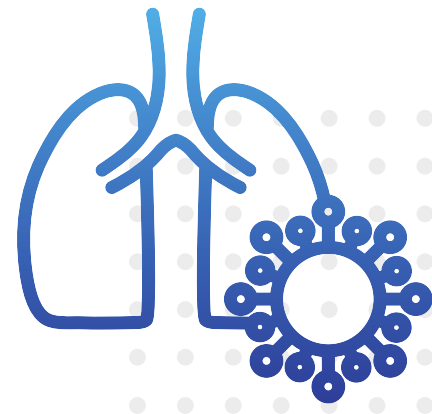


# Influenza

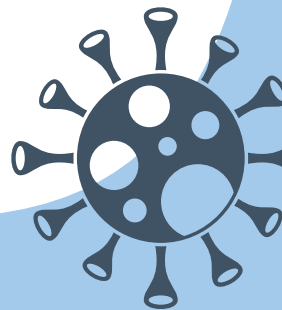
Public Health Services Department - Health Education and Promotion Section

2nd Edition - May 2023



## What is Influenza "Flu"?

- Influenza is an infectious respiratory disease caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs.
- Influenza virus can range from mild to severe symptoms, as well as death in some cases.



## How does Influenza Spread?

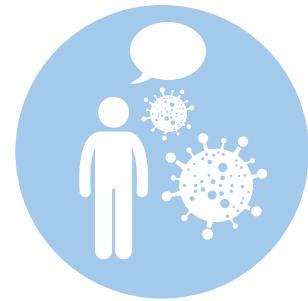
- Flu is a very contagious disease.
- It can spread from person to person through droplets from:



Coughing



Sneezing



Talking

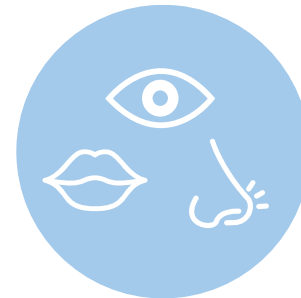


## How does Influenza Spread?

- The flu virus can also be caught from touching a surface or an object contaminated with the virus, and then touching mouth, nose or eyes.



Contaminated Surface



Touching mouth, nose or eyes

# Influenza Types & Subtypes

## Types

**Influenza A**

**Influenza B**

## Examples

**A (H1N1)**

**A (H3N2)**

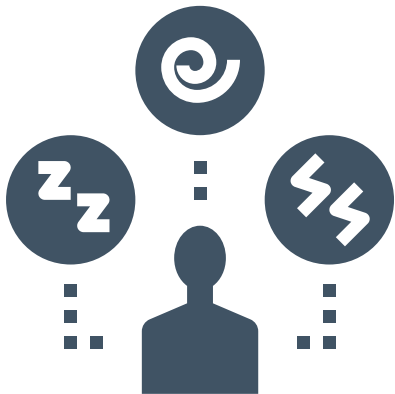
**B (Victoria)**

**B (Yamagata)**



## What are the Symptoms of Influenza?

- Symptoms of influenza may range from mild to severe.
- People who are infected with influenza may or may not feel all the symptoms.



# What are the Symptoms of Influenza?



**Cough**



**Sore throat**



**Runny or stuffy nose**



**Muscle or body aches**



**Fever or feeling feverish/chills**



**Headaches**



**Fatigue (tiredness)**



**Vomiting and diarrhea**

## Mode of Transmission:

### Person to person:

People who have the flu can spread it up to 6 feet away by droplets produced when flu patients cough, sneeze, or talk.

These droplets may fall into nearby people's mouths or noses, or they may be inhaled into the lungs.

A person can get influenza by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes.

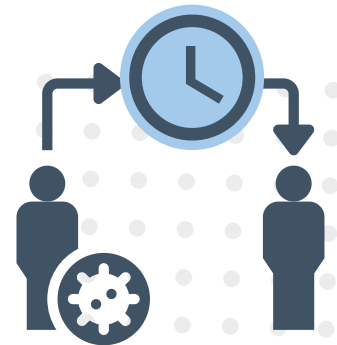




## Mode of Transmission:

### Period of Contagiousness:

- People who have the flu are most contagious during the first three to four days of their illness.
- Most healthy adults may be able to infect others one day before symptoms appear and continuing for up to five to seven days after becoming ill.
- Children and people with weakened immune systems may be able to spread the virus for more than 7 days.



## High Risk Groups:

High risk groups of influenza infection and complications:



People 65 Years and Older



Young Children

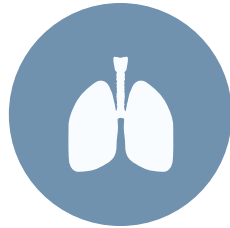


Pregnant Women

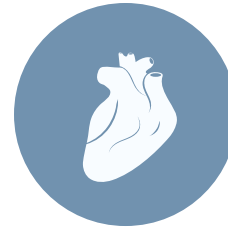
## High Risk Groups:



Liver diseases



Respiratory diseases



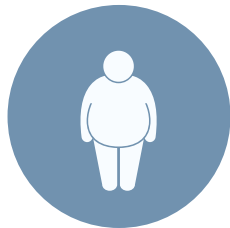
Heart diseases and stroke



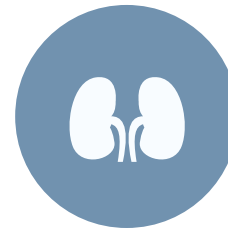
Cancer



Diabetes



Obesity



Kidney diseases



HIV/AIDS

## Treatment:

- Antiviral drugs may be used to treat flu symptoms if a person becomes ill.
- Antiviral drugs can reduce symptoms and shorten the length of the illness by 1 or 2 days. They can also help prevent serious flu complications such as pneumonia.



## Treatment:

- Antiviral medications are not the same as antibiotics.
- They are prescription medications (pills, liquid, or inhaled powder) that are not available over the counter.



## Tips to Relieve Symptoms:

- Drink plenty of fluids. Choose water, juice and warm soups to prevent dehydration.
- Rest and get more sleep to help your immune system fight infection.
- Maintain a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables.
- Exercise to help reduce stress and improve immune function.
- Consider pain relievers.



## Preventive Steps:

- A yearly flu vaccine is recommended to protect against flu viruses.
- Flu vaccines are beneficial because they reduce:



Annual burden



Hospitalizations



Death rates



## Frequently Asked Questions:

Who is eligible to take the flu vaccine?



Everyone starting from the age of six months.

When to take the flu vaccine?



Ideally by the end of October or according to winter season in each region.





## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Are flu vaccines safe?



- Flu vaccines have good safety record.
- Millions of people have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there have been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines.
- Vaccines are safe and effective.
- Before licensing any vaccine, it is tested extensively for many years.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

Why do people need to get the flu vaccine every year?



- Flu viruses are able to mutate and evolve very quickly, so the vaccine which was taken in the previous season may not give protection from the viruses circulating in the next season.
- In addition, immunity level against influenza viruses starts to decline over time.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the side effects of flu vaccines?



- The vaccine, like any other medicine, can have some side-effects.
- Some minor side effects may occur following a flu vaccination, including redness or pain in the injected area, low grade fever, and aches.
- These are mild and short-lasting side effects, especially when compared to the symptoms of severe influenza infection.
- Get medical advice or go to the nearest emergency department if the fever begins after more than 48 hours after vaccination, or lasts more than 48 hours, as this may indicate coronavirus or another infection.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

Why is it important to vaccinate high risk groups?



To reduce their risk of developing serious flu complications.

Is flu vaccination important for health care worker?



Yes, vaccination is important for health care workers and others who live with or care for people who are at higher risk of getting the flu.



# Everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs



Hands should be washed frequently with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.



Avoid close contact with sick people.



Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth to reduce the spread of germs.



Surfaces and objects that could be contaminated with flu viruses should be cleaned and disinfected.



Follow the cough etiquette.

## References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, November 18). About flu. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html>

Health Direct. (2021). Coughs and cold in children. Retrieved from <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/coughs-and-colds-in-children>

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. (2021, November 1). Influenza (flu). Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/flu/symptoms-causes/syc-2035171920351184>

World Health Organization. (2018, November 6). Influenza (seasonal). Retrieved from [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-\(seasonal\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-(seasonal))

# PROTECT YOURSELF