

# THE FLU



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

## Vaccination is your best protection. Get vaccinated today!

Flu vaccines can both prevent the disease, and make it milder if you do get the flu. That means fewer hospitalizations and fewer sick days.

Vaccinations are offered through physician offices, and many pharmacies and grocery stores. For information on the flu or where to get vaccinated, visit [www.flu.delaware.gov](http://www.flu.delaware.gov) or call 1-800-282-8672.

### Delawareans are also encouraged to prevent infection by:

- **Washing hands with soap** frequently or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers, especially after coughing, sneezing, or touching your face.
- **Covering coughs and sneezes** with a tissue and disposing of the tissue immediately. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Droplets from a sneeze can travel up to six feet.
- **Staying home when sick** and not returning to school or work until 24 hours after a fever.

### Five steps to take if you get the flu:

- **Stay at home and rest.**
- **Avoid close contact** with well people in your house so you won't make them sick.
- **Drink plenty of water** and other clear liquids to prevent fluid loss (dehydration).
- **Treat fever and cough** with medicines you can buy at the store.
- If you get very sick or are pregnant or have a medical condition (like asthma) that puts you at higher risk of flu complications, **call your doctor**. You may need antiviral medication.

### When should you seek medical attention?

IN CHILDREN	IN ADULTS
Fast breathing or trouble breathing	Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
Bluish skin color	Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
Not drinking enough fluids	Sudden dizziness
Not waking up or not interacting	Confusion
Being so irritable that the child doesn't want to be held	Severe or persistent vomiting
Flu-like symptoms improve but return with fever and worse cough	Flu-like symptoms that improve but return with fever and worse cough
Fever with a rash	

In addition to the signs above, get medical help right away for any infant who has any of these symptoms:

Inability to eat
Trouble breathing
No tears when crying
Significantly fewer wet diapers than normal



# Vaccination: protecting each other.

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## PROTECTING ELDERLY AND OTHERS WHO ARE VULNERABLE

The flu can be a particularly hard on the elderly and other vulnerable people, so extra precautions are important. Flu vaccines can both prevent the disease, and make it milder if you do get the flu. That means fewer hospitalizations and fewer sick days.

Vaccinations are offered through physician offices, and many pharmacies and grocery stores. For information on the flu or where to get vaccinated, visit [www.flu.delaware.gov](http://www.flu.delaware.gov) or call 1-800-282-8672.

### To Protect Seniors And Vulnerable Populations

- **Ensure all your loved ones are vaccinated against the illness.** Vaccines are available from DPH clinics, physicians, pharmacies, and many grocery stores.
- **If you are receiving treatment in a long-term care facility or in-home care,** ask if the staff is vaccinated against the flu and, if not, the staff person should be wearing a mask at all times.
- **Visits at home or in a facility should be limited if the visitor is under age 16,** or has the flu or is at risk of exposure to the flu. The illness can be transmitted prior to someone showing symptoms.
- **If living with a senior and a family member contracts the flu,** keep the two separate as much as possible and ensure everyone in the home follows sanitary precautions.
- **Wash hands frequently with soap** or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers, especially after you cough, sneeze or touch your face.

- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue** and dispose of the tissue immediately. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your inner elbow. Droplets from a sneeze can travel up to six feet.
- **Stay home when sick** and do not return to work or school until 24 hours after a fever is gone.
- **Contact a medical provider immediately** if flu symptoms appear.
- **Anti-virals may need to be prescribed** to help lessen the severity and length of the illness, but are most effective if taken early.

In addition to seniors, others who are most vulnerable are the very young, pregnant women and those who recently gave birth, and people with underlying medical conditions, such as cancer, lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, and individuals with weak immune systems. These precautions should be applied to these groups as well.

Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue.



## Vaccination: protecting each other.