What You Need to Know During Flu Season

During the Holiday season, family and friend get-togethers can bring about many opportunities to spread viruses, especially the flu.

Flu Activity Q&A*

Q: What sort of flu season is expected this year?
A: It is not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. While flu spreads every year, the timing, severity, and length of the season varies from one season to another.

Q: Will new flu viruses circulate this season?
A: Flu viruses are constantly changing so it’s not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year.

Q: When will flu activity begin and when will it peak?
A: The timing of flu is unpredictable and can vary. Seasonal flu viruses can be detected year-round; however, seasonal flu activity often begins as early as October and November and can continue to occur as late as May. Flu activity most commonly peaks in the United States between December and February.

How do you know if you have the Flu?

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

Is it a cold or flu?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs and Symptoms</th>
<th>Influenza</th>
<th>Cold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symptom onset</td>
<td>Abrupt</td>
<td>Gradual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aches</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Slight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chills</td>
<td>Fairly common</td>
<td>Uncommon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue, weakness</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuffy nose</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest discomfort, cough</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Mild to moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Most Common Flu Symptoms are:

- Fatigue
- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Tremors

The Flu can bring about Complications like:

- Sinusitis
- Bronchitis
- Pneumonia

People with weakened immune systems like older adults or young children are at higher risk for developing serious complications from the flu.

In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense.

What Should You Do To Protect Yourself from the Flu?

In addition, you can take everyday preventive actions like staying away from sick people and washing your hands to reduce the spread of germs. If you are sick with flu, stay home from work or school to prevent spreading flu to others. In addition, there are prescription medications called antiviral drugs that can be used to treat influenza illness.

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

What are the most common flu symptoms?

- Fatigue
- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Tremors

The Flu can bring about Complications like:

- Sinusitis
- Bronchitis
- Pneumonia

People with weakened immune systems like older adults or young children are at higher risk for developing serious complications from the flu.

In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense.

Call the West Windsor Health Department at 609-799-2400
Created by the West Windsor Health Department
Serving West Windsor, Robbinsville and Hightstown