



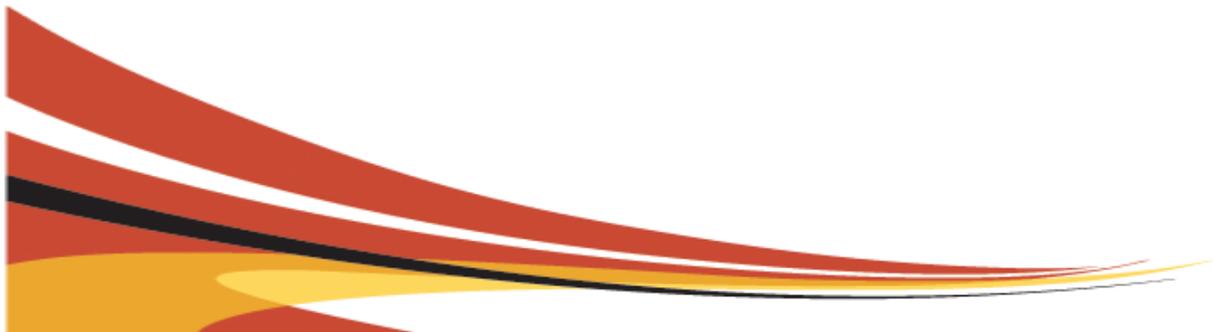
Ways You can Protect Yourself from the Flu

If there is an outbreak of the flu in your community, listen to public health or band council direction regarding school closures and public events. Try to avoid any unnecessary trips to public events. If you do go to public events, try to give yourself as much space as possible from other people, wash your hands as frequently as possible, and try not to touch your mouth, nose, or eyes until you've washed your hands. The use of a sanitizer may be an option in these situations. If possible avoid shaking hands or hugging the people you meet. Because pregnant women in particular are at increased risks for complications from H1N1, they should take extra care.

It is a good idea for all people to avoid touching public doorknobs and door handles as much as possible. When possible use your arm or elbow instead of your hands to push open doors because this will keep your hands clean and help prevent you from transferring any flu viruses into your body.

Flu Prevention Checklist

- Wash hands before eating and preparing meals;
- Wash hands before feeding children – including breastfeeding;
- Wash hands after touching objects that may have been in contact with a sick person (i.e. grocery cart/basket, public door handles, public telephone, elevator buttons, computer keyboard, etc.);
- Have children wash hands after playing with shared toys;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth until able to wash hands;
- If possible, carry a small hand sanitizer for situations when hand washing is not possible;
- Avoid (whenever possible) people who are sick with the flu or flu-like symptoms;
- Disinfect hard household surfaces such as doorknobs;
- Avoid optional public gatherings, or at least avoid close interpersonal contact as much as possible if there is a flu outbreak in the area/community.



Ways you can prevent the spread of the flu within your home

The flu spreads quickly and easily and many community members may be sick during a pandemic. Fortunately, there are some things that you can do around the house to prevent the flu from spreading.

Wash your hands often, using soap, water, and the proper handwashing technique (see guide at left). Teach your family members the proper handwashing technique.

You have probably been told since you were a child that is polite to cover your coughs and sneezes; however, if you are sick with the flu, coughing and sneezing into your hands can actually spread the virus. To prevent the spread of flu germs, you should cough or sneeze into your sleeve, your elbow, or a tissue. This will prevent some of the viruses in your cough or sneeze from being inhaled by someone else, keeps your hands clean, and prevent you from leaving the flu virus on any surfaces that you touch. After you blow your nose, be sure to immediately throw away the tissue and wash your hands.

Wash all hard surfaces, including any toys played with by sick children, with soap and water to disinfect them. Alternatively, you can use a bleach-based disinfectant or other household disinfectant to clean these surfaces. You can make a bleach-based cleaner for these surfaces by mixing 1 part bleach for every 10 parts water. No matter what type of cleaning solution that you use, don't forget to disinfect commonly touched items such as television remote control and door knobs, since the virus can live on these surfaces for up to 2 days. While you might think that the bathroom is the most likely place for the flu virus to hide, people often do not realize that viruses can thrive in the kitchen as well. Try to disinfect the kitchen counters and sink everyday with soap and water. You do not need to use antibacterial soaps. You can also try using other cleansers, bleach, ammonia, or vinegar to kill the germs.

If you do not have clean running water

Once the water has been boiled or treated, you can wash your hands using 2 separate containers. **One container will hold the water supply and the second is used to wash your hands.** Moving soapy hands in a container of water can mimic running water. Be sure to throw away the water used to wash your hands once you've finished and clean and dry the container.

Proper Handwashing Technique

1. Put a small amount of liquid soap in the palm of one hand. (Liquid soap is more hygienic. If bar soap is the only option make sure it is stored on a rack so that the bar is not sitting in water. Bar soaps stay moist and germs can live on them.)
2. Rub your hands together for 20 seconds to produce a lather. Scrub between your fingers, under your fingernails, and the backs of your hands.
3. Rinse your hands well with running water for at least 10 seconds. Try not to touch the faucets once your hands are clean. Use a towel to turn off the water.
4. Dry your hands using a towel. Change the hand towel every day. During a flu pandemic and during the regular cold and flu season you may want to give each sick family member his/her own hand towel.
5. Model good handwashing technique to children and teach them the amount of time required to clean their hands properly.

Adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/chn-rcs/handwash->

Boost your immune system

Eating well, staying hydrated, staying active, managing stress, and getting enough sleep help keep your immune system ready to fight off the flu virus.

Important vitamins for disease prevention:

Vitamin D has been found to have antiviral properties. You can get vitamin D from sun exposure, however your body's ability to create vitamin D varies based on latitude, season, age, sunscreen use, time of day, and skin pigmentation. Natural vitamin D production from the sun decreases during the winter. Dietary sources of vitamin D include fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, whitefish, and char), and egg yolk.

Niacin (vitamin B3) also has been found to have antiviral properties. Sources of niacin include barley, beef, fish, chicken, and almonds.

Vitamin C has been shown to have effects on the duration and severity of the flu. All fruits and vegetables have some amount of vitamin C. The best sources of vitamin C include: green and red peppers, citrus fruits, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes, and leafy greens.

Thiamine (vitamin B1) is found in whole wheat, oatmeal, corn, most beans, and most vegetables. Thiamine has been found to have anti-viral properties.

Herbal Immune Boosters

- **Echinacea** is a well known immune system booster and can be used on a continual basis. It stimulates the production of interferon which is produced by the body to fight and prevent infections
- **Elderberry** can prevent infections and shorten the duration of the flu.
- **Licorice** can help stimulate production of interferon.
- **Larch tree extract** has many immune enhancing properties.
- **Ginseng** can be used as an energy booster, anti-inflammatory, and to treat flu symptoms.
- **Garlic** can help prevent infections.
- **Wheatgrass** can be taken in juice form to boost the production of interferon.

Things I can do to prevent the flu:
1. Examples: Disinfect the computer keyboard and clean the bathroom faucets.
2.
3.
4.
5.

When someone gets sick

When someone gets sick they should be placed in rooms that are well ventilated, if at all possible. This will help reduce the amount of virus in the air. The sick person's dirty clothes, bed linens, and towels will need to be washed and dried, ideally with hot water if at all possible. These items can be dried outside in the sun since the sun has ability to kill the virus. Try to avoid sharing any personal items or drinks with the sick person. The sick person's dishes and cutlery need to be washed using soapy water. They do not need to be cleaned separately.

Remember that sick people need to get rest. In other words, they should not have too many visitors. This will help them get the rest they need while preventing potential visitors from catching the flu themselves. People with the flu need to drink fluids (especially clear fluids like water, juice, tea, etc.) and eat nutritious foods.

Sick people should stay at home so that they don't infect other people. If you are sick, you should stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone (if you are using fever-reducing medication you'll have to stay home longer).

Important numbers in case I get sick

In case you end up with the flu, in this section you can record important numbers and keep them in an easily accessible location so that you can refer to them as needed.

Person	Number
Work Contact:	
Someone to look after the kids:	
Health Centre:	
Nurse Hotline:	
School:	
Other:	

Ways to protect myself

Identify things you can do in these various situations to protect yourself from the flu to help you to remember.

At work:

At public places (like the store):

At social events:

How can I limit contact with others if necessary:

When a family members gets sick:

My questions for my health care provider are:

I have concerns about:

My back-up plan if I get sick and I can't go to work:

My back-up plan for if a family member gets sick and can't go to school/work:

