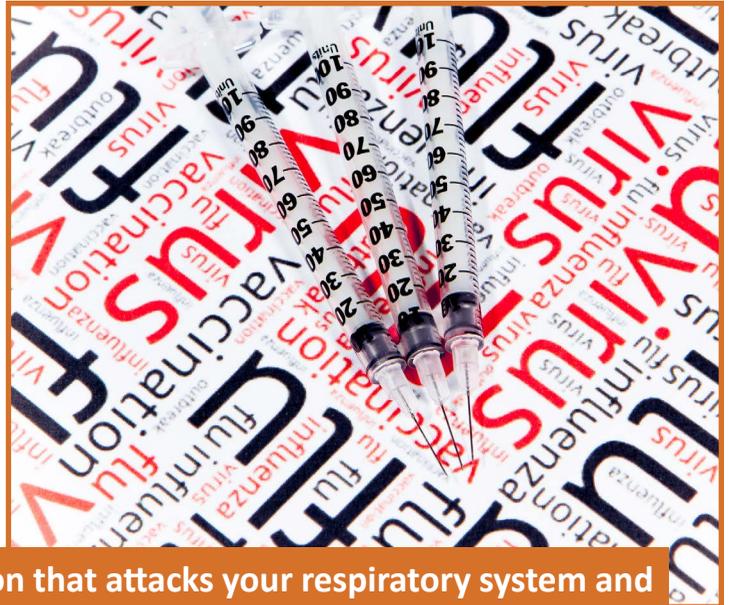


Protect yourself from the flu



Influenza (flu) is an acute viral infection that attacks your respiratory system and can infect any person at any age. Every year this highly contagious virus infects millions of people around the world, and can result in severe illness and death in high risk populations, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

What is flu?

Flu is a respiratory illness spread through contact with an infected individual. This virus can cause a series of symptoms including a sore throat, coughing, fatigue, and a high fever.

While most people will recover from the flu in a few days, for children younger than 2 years, adults over 65 years old, and pregnant women, the flu can be life-threatening.

However, there are certain ways protect yourself against this virus:

1. Get the flu vaccine.

The flu vaccine is available to all individuals over the age of 6 months, and is highly recommended by WHO to those at high risk of developing serious flu-related complications (pregnant women, children between 6 months and 5 years old, adults over the age of 65, or those with certain chronic medical conditions).

The vaccine has been reasonably effective in preventing the flu in healthy adults which is why WHO encourages all adults to get vaccinated annually to protect themselves from getting the flu.

2. Wash your hands frequently.

Good hygiene is a great way to protect yourself from getting the flu, so be sure to wash your hands regularly with warm water and soap.

Experts recommend rubbing your hands together under warm water for at least 20 seconds to eliminate all the germs. Don't forget to wash underneath your fingernails and in between your fingers too, as these are where germs often breed.

3. Give your immune system a boost.

Another prevention strategy for the flu is to ensure that you maintain a healthy and strong immune system. Natural ways to boost your immune system include eating a balanced diet, exercising, and getting enough rest. Increase the amount of fruit and vegetables you are eating to help boost your immune system and aim to get 7-9 hours of sleep every night.

What to do if you get sick

If you do get the flu, get plenty of bed rest and stay hydrated. Most people take 1 or 2 weeks to recover without medication. However, if you are at high risk of complications, it is recommended that you visit your doctor.