

PREVENTING INFLUENZA

WHAT CAUSES INFLUENZA?

Influenza (the flu) is caused by a virus.

WHO IS AT RISK OF GETTING INFLUENZA?

Anyone can get influenza.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Influenza usually causes at least 2-3 of the following:

- Fever
- Aches and pains
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Stuffy or runny nose

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Influenza is spread in the following ways:

- Through the air by coughing and sneezing,
- On hands, cups, cutlery, tissues or other objects that have been in contact with the mouth or nose.

HOW CAN I AVOID CATCHING INFLUENZA?

- Have the flu shot every year
- Avoid contact with infected family and friends
- Do not share eating or drinking utensils
- Avoid crowded populations and enclosed spaces
- Practice basic personal hygiene such as regular hand washing
- Practice respiratory etiquette
- Wash or sanitize hands frequently

Note: Adults are infectious (can spread influenza) for 5 days after symptoms appear. Children are infectious for up to 7 days.

DO ANTIBIOTICS HELP?

Antibiotics do not work against viruses, so they do not work against influenza. Some people with influenza may need antibiotics for secondary infections caused by bacteria.

Source: Control of Infectious Diseases 18th Edition