


Everyday habits can also help you avoid catching or spreading the flu (influenza):

- Stay home if you're sick. You can pass the flu to friends or family before you even know you have it. See a health care provider if your symptoms persist or get worse.
- If you're visiting a loved one in a hospital, nursing home, or other assisted living facility, ask a nurse for a mask and be sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer. Some facilities may put restrictions on visitors. Check before you go.
- Don't hold or kiss a baby if you're sick. Babies under six months old cannot get the flu shot.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your upper sleeve, and try to avoid touching your face with your hand. If you use a tissue, throw it away after one use.
- Use your own drinking cups, straws, and utensils.
- Eat nutritious meals, get plenty of rest, and don't smoke.
- Frequently clean commonly touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, refrigerator handles, telephones, faucets).

<h2>Is it a cold or flu?</h2>		
		
Signs and Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Symptom onset	Abrupt	Gradual
Fever	Usual	Rare
Aches	Usual	Slight
Chills	Fairly common	Uncommon
Fatigue, weakness	Usual	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common
Chest discomfort, cough	Common	Mild to moderate
Headache	Common	Rare

A person with influenza can be contagious from one day before symptoms appear until about a week after. People who are ill should stay at home to avoid spreading the influenza virus.

Keep your child home from school for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.) A fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C)* or higher