**Flu News You Can Use**

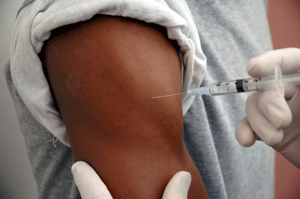
It's the season for colds and the flu.Select a topic below to learn more:

* Simple steps to [protect yourself against colds and flu](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/Flu#Protect)
* [Flu symptoms](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/Flu#Cold or Flu)– how to tell if it's cold or the flu
* [Flu resources](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/Flu#Additional Resources)
* Don't get left in the cold this flu season – Good Morning Texas [flu video](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/Flu#GMT)

**Simple steps to protect yourself against colds and flu**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal flu.

**Who should get the flu shot?**



The CDC recommends seasonal flu shots for:

* Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine each year.

While everyone should get a flu vaccine each flu season, it's especially important that certain people get vaccinated either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications.

**Additional tips to protect yourself and your family from colds and the flu:**

1. **Avoid close contact.**Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
2. **Stay home when you are sick.**If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
4. **Clean your hands.**Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
6. **Practice other good health habits.**Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

**Flu symptoms — how to tell if it's a cold or the flu**

It can sometimes be hard to tell whether you or your child has a cold or the flu. Generally, a cold is less severe than the flu. Cold symptoms may come on gradually, whereas the flu tends to hit fast and hard.

Flu symptoms can include:

* Fever or feeling feverish/chills   
  *(Not everyone with flu will have a fever.)*
* Cough
* Sore throat
* Runny or stuffy nose
* Muscle or body aches
* Headaches
* Fatigue
* Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

**Additional flu resources**

* [CDC seasonal flu information](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/body.cfm?id=943&gotolink=http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm)
* [Flu.gov](http://www.methodisthealthsystem.org/body.cfm?id=943&gotolink=http://flu.gov/)
* [Health library cold information](http://methodisthealthsystem.staywellsolutionsonline.com/Library/DiseasesConditions/Adult/Infectious/85,P00620)
* [Health library flu information](http://methodisthealthsystem.staywellsolutionsonline.com/Library/DiseasesConditions/Adult/Infectious/85,P00625)

**Don’t get left out in the cold this flu season!**