

Ways to protect yourself and others from flu^{1,10}

- Maintain distance or avoid work and activities with symptomatic individuals and households.
- If you don't feel well, stay at home.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Vaccination.

Vaccination is one of the best ways to protect against influenza¹

- Annual flu vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over.¹¹
- Some people may be eligible for flu vaccines funded under the National Immunisation Program.¹²
- Remember, it takes 2–3 weeks after vaccination to build immunity.



Flu and COVID-19

- It can be very difficult to distinguish between the symptoms of COVID-19, influenza, and a cold.¹³
- If you have any infection or respiratory symptoms, self-isolate.¹³
- Follow your state or territory guidelines about COVID-19 testing and contact your GP or pharmacist for further advice.

References: 1. Department of Health, Australia. Influenza (flu). Available at <https://www.health.gov.au/diseases/influenza-flu> Accessed November 2022. 2. CDC. Vaccination Information Statement. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html> Last accessed November 2022. 3. CDC. How flu spreads. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm>. Accessed November 2022. 4. ISG. How Influenza is Spread? Available at <https://www.isg.org.au/index.php/about-influenza/how-influenza-is-spread/> Accessed November 2022. 5. WHO. Influenza (seasonal). [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-\(seasonal\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/influenza-(seasonal)). Last accessed November 2022. 6. CDC. Influenza (Cold versus Flu). Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/coldflu.htm> Accessed November 2022. 7. Australian Influenza Surveillance Report. National 2020 Influenza Season Summary. Available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/aisr-2020-national-influenza-season-summary> Accessed November 2022. 8. Mills, James & Yapp, Tim & CSIRO. Institute of Industrial Technologies. An economic evaluation of three CSIRO manufacturing research projects. CSIRO Institute of Industrial Technologies, Dickson, A.C.T 1996. 9. Populations at risk for severe or complicated influenza illness. Available at <https://www.bmj.com/content/347/bmj.f5061> Accessed November 2022. 10. WHO. Five simple steps to protect against flu. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/five-simple-steps-to-protect-against-flu>. Accessed November 2022. 11. The Australian Immunisation Handbook. 2020. Available at <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/about-the-handbook>. Accessed November 2022. 12. 2020 National Immunisation Program Influenza Vaccines. Clinical advice for vaccination providers. Available at: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/2020-national-immunisation-program-influenza-vaccines-clinical-advice-for-vaccination-providers_0.pdf. Accessed November 2022. 13. Australian government. COVID-19: Identifying the symptoms. Available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/identifying-the-symptoms-english>. Accessed November 2022.

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Are you ready for the 2023 flu season?

Talk to your healthcare professional about protecting yourself and which flu vaccine is right for you.

Anyone can catch the flu¹

Flu is caused by the influenza virus,¹ which changes all the time² and has many different strains.¹ Everyone is at risk of catching flu. It doesn't matter how fit and healthy you are, or your age.^{1,2}

Flu is highly contagious¹

Flu infection occurs when you breathe in droplets from the sneezes and coughs of an infected person, or if you touch a contaminated surface then touch your mouth, eyes, or nose.¹

People with flu can be infectious for over a week³

- **1 day** before symptoms develop
- And
- **Up to 5-7 days** after becoming sick

The flu virus can survive in the environment up to 8 hours or more.⁴



UP TO 5 MINS
on hands
after transfer from
other surfaces



UP TO 1 HOUR
in the air
in enclosed
environments



8+ HOURS
hard surfaces
such as stainless
steel and plastic

Flu symptoms are worse than a common cold^{1,5,6}

Flu symptoms are usually more intense than a cold⁶ and include a runny nose or sneezing, cough or sore throat, fever and chills, headache, body aches, vomiting and diarrhoea (which is more common in children).¹



ONE WEEK

TWO WEEKS +

Most flu symptoms last up to a week but coughing can continue for up to two weeks or more.⁵

Flu can be very serious²

While most people have fairly mild flu symptoms,¹ for some people, flu is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalisation and sometimes even death.² It can cause bronchitis, croup, pneumonia, ear infections, heart and other organ damage, brain inflammation and brain damage.¹

**163,000
CASES⁷**

of flu were detected
in Australia each year
between 2015 and 2020.⁷

**1,500,000
WORK DAYS⁸**

are estimated to be
lost each year to flu
and its associated
complications.⁸



Who is at most risk?^{1,9}

Some people are at greater risk of flu and its complications, including people over **65 years of age**:¹

People with a comorbidity may have up to **2.5x increased risk of death from flu**⁹