INFLUENZA COMMUNITY HANDBOOK
From Basics to Prevention
INFLUENZA BASICS
Influenza: The Disease

- Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.
- It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.
- The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year.
- Every year in the United States, on average 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and about 36,000 people die from flu.
- Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.
3 Types of Influenza Viruses

- **Influenza Type A**
- **Influenza Type B**

  Cause seasonal epidemics of disease almost every winter in the United States.

- **Influenza Type C** - Influenza type C infections cause a mild respiratory illness and are not thought to cause epidemics.
INFLUENZA VIRUSES
Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)

- Avian influenza is an infection caused by avian (bird) influenza (flu) viruses.
- There are many different subtypes of type A influenza viruses. These subtypes differ because of changes in certain proteins on the surface of the influenza A virus (hemagglutinin [HA] and neuraminidase [NA] proteins).
- There are 16 known HA subtypes and 9 known NA subtypes of influenza A viruses. Many different combinations of HA and NA proteins are possible. Each combination represents a different subtype. All known subtypes of influenza A viruses can be found in birds.
- Usually, “avian influenza virus” refers to influenza A viruses found chiefly in birds, but infections with these viruses can occur in humans.
Pandemic Influenza

- A pandemic is a global disease outbreak.
- A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity, and for which there is no vaccine.
- The disease spreads easily person-to-person, causes serious illness, and can sweep across the country and around the world in very short time.
- It is difficult to predict when the next influenza pandemic will occur or how severe it will be. Wherever and whenever a pandemic starts, everyone around the world is at risk.

- Health professionals are concerned that the continued spread of a highly pathogenic avian H5N1 virus across eastern Asia and other countries represents a significant threat to human health. The H5N1 virus has raised concerns about a potential human pandemic because:
  - It is especially virulent
  - It is being spread by migratory birds
  - It can be transmitted from birds to mammals and in some limited circumstances to humans, and
  - Like other influenza viruses, it continues to evolve.
TRANSMISSION & PREVENTION
How Flu Spreads

• Flu viruses spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza.

• Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

• Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.
Preventing Seasonal Flu: Get Vaccinated

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. There are two types of vaccines:

1. The "flu shot" – an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle. The flu shot is approved for use in people 6 months of age and older, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

2. The nasal-spray flu vaccine – a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine”). LAIV is approved for use in healthy* people 2-49 years of age who are not pregnant.
SELF CARE
If You Get Sick

- **Fever, headaches, muscle pain.** Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Follow the directions on the package, or as your doctor recommends. Aspirin should not be given to children younger than 18 years unless specifically prescribed by a doctor because of possible serious complications. For fever in a child younger than 2 years, consult your doctor.

- **Vomiting and diarrhea.** Drink plenty of fluids including water, juices and fluids with electrolytes, such as sports drinks and pediatric rehydration fluids. Avoid caffeinated drinks, such as coffee, tea and cola, because they cause the body to lose more fluids.

- **Cough.** Use a cough suppressant if coughing interferes with sleeping and eating. Check the product label or talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which products to use, their side-effects and dosage. Use all medications only as directed.

- **Congestion.** Use a decongestant. Nasal sprays may give relief, but do not use them for more than two to three days. Check the product label or talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which products to use, their side-effects and dosage. Use all medications only as directed.

- **Sore throat.** Drink more fluids, suck on throat lozenges, gargle with warm salt water and spit out the water after gargling. Add moisture to the air with a humidifier. Decrease the use of your voice.

- **Antiviral.** Your doctor may prescribe antiviral medication. To be effective, antiviral treatment must be started within two days after onset of illness. Check with your doctor if you are at high risk for serious complications from influenza. During a flu pandemic, we do not know how effective current antivirals will be against a pandemic flu virus, or their availability.

- **General care.** Get lots of rest, drink plenty of fluids and avoid using alcohol and tobacco.
## COLD vs FLU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOM</th>
<th>COLD</th>
<th>FLU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEVER</td>
<td>Fever is pretty rare with a cold.</td>
<td>Fever is usually present with the flu. A temperature of 101°F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACHES</td>
<td>Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.</td>
<td>Severe aches and pains are common with the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILLS</td>
<td>Chills are uncommon with a cold.</td>
<td>Chills are fairly common in most flu cases. Chills and shivering are a normal reaction to a cold environment, but unexplained chills can also be a sign of the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIREDNESS</td>
<td>Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.</td>
<td>Tiredness is moderate to severe with the flu. It’s normal to feel tired at the end of a long day or when you don’t get adequate sleep, but unexplained tiredness can be a sign of the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUDDEN SYMPTOMS</td>
<td>Cold symptoms are not sudden and develop over a few days.</td>
<td>The flu has a rapid onset with 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUGHING</td>
<td>A hacking, productive (mucus producing) cough is often present with a cold.</td>
<td>A dry, nonproductive cough that does not produce mucus is usually present with the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNEEZING</td>
<td>Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.</td>
<td>Sneezing is not as common, but can accompany the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUFFY or RUNNY NOSE</td>
<td>A stuffy or runny nose usually accompanies a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.</td>
<td>Stuffy or runny nose can be present with the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORE THROAT</td>
<td>Sore throat is commonly present with a cold. A sore throat is pain and inflammation in the throat that usually comes with a cold.</td>
<td>Sore throat is not as common, but can be present with the flu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEST DISCOMFORT</td>
<td>Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.</td>
<td>Chest discomfort is often severe with the flu. Chest discomfort is pain or abnormal sensations that you feel anywhere along the front of your body between your neck and upper abdomen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEADACHE</td>
<td>A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.</td>
<td>A headache is very common with the flu, present in 80% of flu cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disclaimer:**
This is not a substitute for professional, on-site medical diagnosis. Visit your doctor or other healthcare professional for an accurate diagnosis of the flu or cold.

NoFlu.org
WHEN TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE
Emergency Warning Signs
In children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash
Emergency Warning Signs

In adults

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

- **Seek medical care immediately (call your doctor or go to an emergency room) if you or someone you know is experiencing any of the signs above. When you arrive, tell the reception staff that you think you have the flu. You may be asked to wear a mask and/or sit in a separate area to protect others from getting sick.**
PROTECTING YOURSELF & OTHERS
HAND WASHING

Hand washing technique:

1. Palm to palm
2. Right palm over left dorsum and left palm over right dorsum
3. Palm to palm fingers interlaced
4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left and vice versa
6. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

Cover your Cough

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

Put your used tissue in the waste basket.

Clean your Hands after coughing or sneezing.

Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
### Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antiviral</td>
<td>A medication that may be used to treat people who have been infected by a virus to help limit the impact of some symptoms and reduce the potential for serious complications. People who are in high risk groups are often given antiviral drugs because of their increased potential to develop additional health issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avian Influenza</td>
<td>Commonly known as bird flu, this strain of influenza virus is naturally occurring in birds. Wild birds can carry the virus and may not get sick from it; however, domestic birds may become infected by the virus and often die from it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemic</td>
<td>The rapid spread of a disease that infects some or many people in a community or region at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5N1</td>
<td>The scientific name for a subtype of the avian influenza (bird flu) virus that has spread from birds to humans. The scientific names for these subtypes are classified by different proteins on the virus. New subtypes naturally occur when the proteins change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td>A contagious respiratory illness caused by particular strains of viruses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza Pandemic</td>
<td>A global outbreak of the influenza disease that occurs when a new influenza virus appears in the human population. Because people have little or no immunity to the new strain, serious illness can occur, and the virus can spread easily and rapidly from person to person with no vaccine immediately available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>The physical separation of a person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease from others in a community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandemic</td>
<td>An outbreak of a disease that affects large numbers of throughout the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandemic Influenza</td>
<td>A virulent influenza (flu) caused by a new flu virus strain to which humans have not been exposed. It is more serious than a typical seasonal flu because there is no natural resistance or immunity to it and infects large numbers of people of different ages all over the world, causing serious illness and possibly death.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Quarantine**

The physical separation of healthy people who have been exposed to an infectious disease—for a period of time—from those who have not been exposed.

**Seasonal Flu**

A contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza (flu) viruses occurring every year. It affects an average of 5 to 20 percent of the U.S. population by causing mild to severe illness, and in some instances can lead to death. Most people have some immunity, and a vaccine is available.

**Social Distancing**

A disease prevention strategy in which a community imposes limits on social (face-to-face) interaction to reduce exposure to and transmission of a disease. These limitations could include, but are not limited to, school and work closures, cancellation of public gatherings and closure or limited mass transportation.

**Vaccine**

An injection, usually of an innocuous (weak or killed) form of the virus, that stimulates the production of antibodies by the immune system to help prevent or create resistance to an infection. Vaccines are usually given as a preventive measure.
# Emergency Contacts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>Name/Phone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local personal emergency contact</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-town personal emergency contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitals near:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family physician(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State public health department (See list on <a href="http://www.pandemicflu.gov/state/statecontacts.html">www.pandemicflu.gov/state/statecontacts.html</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer contact and emergency information</td>
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<tr>
<td>School contact and emergency information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious/spiritual organization</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterinarian</td>
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