

# Royal Throne The Influenza (Flu) Virus



August 2012

**What is influenza?** Influenza, commonly referred to as the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Influenza is a highly contagious virus that affects mainly the nose, throat, chest, and lungs. 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.

**The Spread of influenza:** Flu viruses mainly spread 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 one day before symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick.

### If you get sick:

- Stay Home
- Get lots of rest, drink plenty of liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco
- There are over-the-counter (OTC) medications to relieve the symptoms of the flu.
- Remember that serious illness from the flu is more likely in certain groups of people including 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, people with certain chronic condition and young children.
- Consult your doctor early for the best treatment, but also be aware of emergency warning signs that require urgent medical attention.

See Chris Lee in the health department for more information.

### Is it a Cold or the Flu?

The cold and flu are both respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different types of viruses with different symptoms. See below to learn the difference between the two.

Signs and Symptoms	Influenza (Flu)	Cold
Symptom Onset	Abrupt	Gradual
Fever	Usual; lasts 3—4 days	Rare
Aches	Usual; often severe	Slight
Chills	Fairly common	Uncommon
Fatigue, weakness	Usual	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common
Sore Throat	Sometimes	Common
Chest discomfort, cough	Common; can be severe	Mild to moderate; hacking cough
Headache	Common	Rare

**Who should get vaccinated?** Anyone who wants to reduce the chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. However, certain people should get vaccinated each year either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complication or because they live with or care for high risk person.

**The Nasal-Spray Vaccine** is an option for healthy people 2—49 years of age who are not pregnant, healthy persons who live with or care for those in a high risk group.

### 8 Ways You Can Stay Healthy at Work

1. **Maintain a healthy lifestyle** through rest, diet, exercise, and relaxation.
2. **Wash you hands frequently** with soap and water for 20 seconds or us an alcohol-based hand cleaner if soap and water are not available. 
3. **Avoid touching your nose, mouth, and eyes.** Germs spread this way.
4. **Cover you coughs and sneezes with a tissue,** or cough and sneeze into your elbow. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles.
5. **Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean,** such as telephones, computer keyboards, doorknobs, etc.
6. **Do not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment.** If you need to use a co-worker's phone desk, or other equipment clean it first.
7. **Don't spread the flu! If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home.**
8. **Get Vaccinated against seasonal flu, when vaccine is available in your area.**

Green Note: Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save 25 gallons a month.

**"We judge others by their actions, but we judge ourselves by our intentions"**