



'Tis The Season for the Sneezin': Tips to Stay Healthy During Flu Season

Aches, coughing, fever, fatigue. Is the flu sneaking up on you?

You are not alone.

Flu season is upon us and 33 states are reporting high levels of flu activity.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, typically the flu season peaks in January and February. And while it is often dismissed as “just the flu,” the flu can be fatal if left untreated. States around the country are already reporting dozens of flu-related deaths, including 19 flu-related deaths in Texas and 15 in Arkansas. The flu is no joke.

Protect yourself and your family by following these flu-fighting tips:

- The best method of flu prevention, and your first line of defense, is a flu shot. Flu shots reduce your chance of getting the flu, but it also reduces the chance those around you getting the flu by creating something called “herd immunity”—the flu virus has fewer ways of spreading with each person that is vaccinated. A flu shot will protect both you and any stubborn family members! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends every U.S. citizen six months of age and older be vaccinated.
- Wash your hands frequently. Briefly rinsing your hands with water does not count! Take a full 20 seconds to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Your body (and the bodies around you) will thank you.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your forearm.
- If you're sick, stay home. Set an example for your co-workers and friends by not coming to work when you're under the weather. Rest is important for recovery and will protect co-workers from the flu as well.



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Not sure whether you have a cold or the flu? In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder than the flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.

Learn more on how to fight the flu at the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](https://www.cdc.gov).