

How to take Care of Someone with the Flu and When to Seek Medical Attention

The flu usually starts suddenly with:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Severe Muscle Aches
- Tiredness, which can be extreme and can last 2 or more weeks
- Dry Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or Stuffy Nose

What to do if you have flu symptoms:

- Rest in Bed
- Drink lots of fluids (water or juice)
- Take non-aspirin pain relievers such as Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, etc.)

Never give aspirin to children or teens with fever because they can develop a serious disease called Reye syndrome

- Stay at home for at least 5 days (7 days for children) after you get sick so that you do not pass the flu to others
- Talk with your health care provider about prescription drugs because they can cause serious side effects in some people

People at Risk for complications from the flu:

Young children, people 65 years of age and older, pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions are at risk for serious complications from the flu. If you are at risk for complications, call your health care provider as soon as your first flu symptoms start. He/She may want to do a test to confirm that you have the flu and recommend antiviral drugs if you do have the flu.

You should see a doctor or go to an emergency room if:

- Fever does not get better after 3-5 days
- Breathing is fast, difficult or painful
- Skin has a blue color
- There is yellow mucous with cough
- The fever or cough goes away for 24 hours then returns
- You are not able to drink enough fluids
- You have less than the usual amount of urine or the urine is dark

Parents should call a doctor if an infant or child has any of the symptoms above or if the infant or child:

- Still acts sick once the fever is gone
- Looks very sick or is unusually drowsy or fussy
- Has a stiff neck, severe headache, severe sore throat, severe earache or unexplained rash, or has repeated vomiting or diarrhea
- Has a fever and has had a seizure
- Has a weak immune system because of disease or medication

What to do if you become ill after traveling to a country where there is bird flu (H5N1).

If you travel to an area affected by bird flu and become ill with a fever and cough or difficulty breathing within 10 days of your return, call your health care provider right away. Be prepared to tell the Doctor about your symptoms, where you traveled, and if you had close contact with poultry. If you develop these problems after contact with a sick person who has recently traveled to the affected areas, call your health care provider right away.