

Managing Influenza

Self Care at Home

- **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.
- **Antivirals.** 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.

When to Seek Medical Care for Children and Teenagers

See a doctor any time you feel uncomfortable about how your child is looking or acting.

See a doctor if your child has:	Go to the emergency room if your child is:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age three months or younger with temperature of 100.4°F (38° C) or higher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoarse cry, or a barking cough or is pulling on his/her ears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathing with difficulty (wheezing, noisy, too fast/too slow, pulling muscles between ribs when breathing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased eating and drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eating or drinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of heart or lung disease that requires medical care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing symptoms such as pale or blue lips, hands or feet, cold legs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of disease or treatment that weakens the immune system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having continuous vomiting and/or diarrhea
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged crying and cannot be calmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not urinating – for babies, no wet diaper in 8 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased activity, no interest in playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeping more than normal, difficult to arouse, confused, unresponsive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of fever with sore throat, headache, stomach ache, earache 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having seizures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical condition that requires taking aspirin regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing signs of pain including headache, stiff neck, sensitivity to light

When to Seek Medical Care for Adults

See a doctor any time there is concern about how the adult is looking or acting.

See a doctor if an adult has:	Go to the emergency room if an adult is:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher for 48 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breathing with difficulty or pain
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combination of fever with sore throat, headache, severe earache, stomach ache, muscle aches that do not improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeling short of breath while resting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hoarse, barking cough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coughing bloody sputum or phlegm
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History of heart or lung disease or any chronic disease that requires regular medical care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeling chest pain
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History of disease or treatment that weakens the immune system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having continuous vomiting and/or diarrhea
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drowsy, difficult to arouse or is unresponsive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Showing signs of disorientation or confusion