

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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FLU OR COVID-19

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both **contagious respiratory illnesses**, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses. Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing **may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis**.

COVID-19 Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported — ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

Typically, a person develops symptoms 5 days after being infected, but symptoms can appear as early as 2 days after infection or as late as 14 days after infection, and the time range can vary.

If a person has COVID-19, they may be contagious for a longer period of time than if they had the flu.

Flu Symptoms

Influenza (flu) can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Flu is different from a cold. Flu usually comes on suddenly. People who have flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

Typically, a person develops symptoms anywhere from **1 to 4 days after infection**.

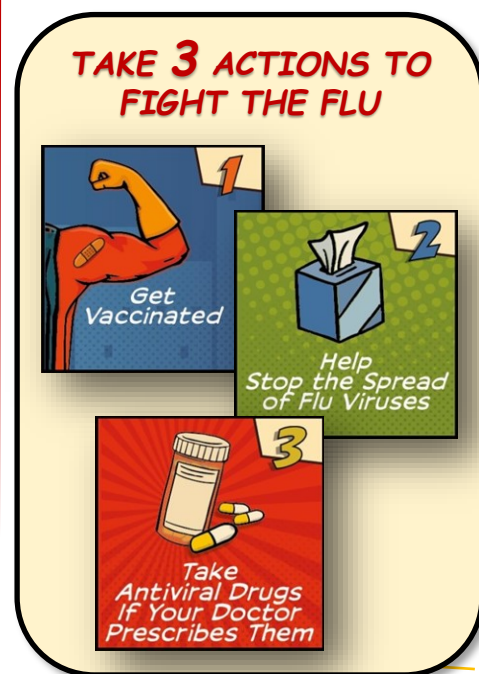
(CDC, Aug 18, 2020)

VACCINES

There are multiple FDA-licensed influenza vaccines produced annually to protect against the 3 or 4 flu viruses that scientists anticipate will circulate each year.

GET YOUR FLU VACCINE.

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. Vaccine developers and other researchers and manufacturers are expediting the development of a vaccine to prevent COVID-19



An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!



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FLU and COVID-19 Facts

How the Viruses Spread

Both **COVID-19** and **flu** can spread from person-to-person who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), mainly by droplets made when people with the illness cough, sneeze, or talk. The droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby or be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get infected by physical human contact (e.g. shaking hands) or by touching a surface or object that has virus on it and then touching his or her own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

Both the flu virus and the virus that causes COVID-19 may be spread to others by people before they begin showing symptoms, with very mild symptoms or who never developed symptoms.

COVID-19 is more contagious among certain populations and age groups than flu and has been observed to have more superspreading events. It can quickly and easily spread to a lot of people.

Complications - Both COVID-19 and flu can result in complications, including:

- Pneumonia
- Respiratory failure
- Acute respiratory distress syndrome (i.e. fluid in lungs)
- Sepsis
- Cardiac injury (e.g. heart attacks and stroke)
- Multiple-organ failure (respiratory failure, kidney failure, shock)
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions (involving the lungs, heart, nervous system or diabetes)
- Inflammation of the heart, brain or muscle tissues
- Secondary bacterial infections (i.e. infections that occur in people who have already been infected with flu or COVID-19)

Additional complications associated with **COVID-19** can include:

- Blood clots in the veins and arteries of the lungs, heart, legs or brain
- Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C)

Treatment

Prescription **influenza antiviral drugs** are FDA-approved to treat **flu**. People who are hospitalized with flu or at high-risk of flu complications with flu symptoms are recommended to be treated with antiviral drugs as soon as possible.

While **remdesivir is an antiviral agent** that is being explored as a treatment for **COVID-19** and is available under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), there are currently no drugs or other therapeutics approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to prevent or treat COVID-19. Studies are in progress to learn more.

(CDC, Aug 18, 2020)



Stay informed to stay healthy!

