

What You Need to Know About the Flu.

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, 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 **vaccine** each year.

Signs and symptoms of flu

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these signs and symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- 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.*

How flu spreads

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes or possibly their nose.

Preventing seasonal flu: Get vaccinated

The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccine each season. About two weeks after vaccination, antibodies develop that protect against influenza virus infection. Also remember to cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often, and stay home if you are sick.

When to get vaccinated against seasonal flu

People are generally immunized in the Fall, but they can still get protection from the flu for what remains of the flu season—even though the vaccine takes several weeks to take effect. The flu season usually peaks in January or February, with some cases continuing into the Spring and even beyond.

Who should get vaccinated

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu vaccine each year. Getting a flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against the serious disease.

Where to get vaccinated

Residents can find out where to get a flu shot by calling doctor's offices, clinics, pharmacies, and supermarkets.



For more information visit
www.fortbendcountyhhs.com
&
www.cdc.gov



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.