



Don't let the flu keep you down. Learn tips to keep you and your family healthy.

Every year millions of people miss work or school due to the flu illness. The key to staying healthy is prevention. Follow these tips to keep yourself protected from the flu:

- 1. Get vaccinated.** Getting your annual flu shot is one of the most effective ways to prevent the flu. Recent studies show vaccine reduces the risk of flu illness by about 50% to 60% among the overall population during seasons when most circulating flu viruses are like the vaccine viruses. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends that all Canadians 6 months of age and older should get the influenza vaccine. Make sure you get your flu shot as soon as you can as it can take up to 2 weeks to build up immunity.
- 2. Wash your hands.** Did you know viruses can live on your hands for up to 3 hours and on hard surfaces (counters, telephones etc.) for up to 2 days? Properly washing your hands often and thoroughly helps prevent the spread of illness.
- 3. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer.** When soap and water is not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol is a good alternative.
- 4. Avoid touching your face or rubbing your eyes.** The flu virus enters the body when we touch surfaces with the virus and then touch our eyes, nose and/or mouth.
- 5. Stick to a healthy lifestyle.** Even with exposure to the flu virus, it doesn't mean you have to get sick. Keeps your immune system working at its best with good nutrition, regular exercise and enough sleep.

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