

Protect yourself and others from flu and help stop the spread of germs.

The **single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated** each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent flu. The tips and resources below will help you learn about steps you can take to protect yourself and others from flu and help stop the spread of germs.

1. **Avoid close contact.**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. **Stay home when you are sick.**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others. **Reminder:** If your child is sent home from school with a fever – they may not return the next day unless fever free for 24 hours and without fever reducing medication.

3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu and other serious respiratory illnesses, like respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), whooping cough, and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), are spread by cough, sneezing, or unclean hands.

4. **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. **Practice other good health habits.**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Source: Centers for Disease Control CDC 24/7 Saving Lives, Protecting People