

Influenza (Flu)

- Influenza (Flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus.
- It is not the virus that mainly causes vomiting and diarrhea.
- The illness may have severe symptoms usually lasting 3-4 days and returning back to normal within 2 weeks.

Symptoms:

- Sudden/rapid onset of symptoms
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fever or feeling feverish with chills
- Cough

Limit spread to others:

- Stay away from others until fever-free for at least 24-hours (temperature should be less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit without medication)
- Wash hands frequently
- Contain coughs and sneezes using the crook of your elbow
- Getting the flu vaccine is the best prevention

Self-care measures:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- Use saline nose drops to loosen mucus
- Use Ibuprofen(✓) 400 mg every 6-8 hours or Acetaminophen(✓) 650 mg every 6 hours as needed to reduce fever/discomfort
- Use Oral Decongestants (Phenylephrine*) for short-term relief of nasal congestion
- Gargle with salt water and use throat sprays/lozenges (*) (containing Benzocaine) for throat pain
- Use heated, humidified air (if you do not have a humidifier try taking a hot shower)
- Monitor temperature. Disposable thermometers (✓) are available in Self-Care if you do not have access to a thermometer

Items marked with a () are available after being evaluated by a nurse in the Health Services Office (Commons, Room 226).*

Items marked with a (✓) are available in the Self-Care Room.



Talk to a Nurse in Health Services about getting a Sick Tray Form. This form will permit a friend to pick up food for you from the Dining Hall and bring it to your room.

When to seek care from a medical provider:

- If you are at high risk for complications (such as pregnancy, immunocompromised, chronic medical conditions, or morbidly obese).
- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit that lasts for more than 24 hours
- For symptoms that last over 10 days and get worse instead of better
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion or disorientation
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Pain/pressure in your chest
- Severe sinus pain
- Very swollen glands in the neck or jaw

Other resources:

http://www.flu.gov/about_the_flu/index.html