Preventing the spread of flu

• Wash your hands regularly or use an antiseptic hand gel.
• Avoid close contact with sick people.
• Cover your nose and mouth with tissue when you cough or sneeze.
• Keep your environment clean and use air filters to help reduce the spread of viruses.
• Get the flu vaccine to help reduce the risk of getting the flu.

The flu vaccine

• An influenza vaccine is available for free to:
  - People aged 65 years and over
  - Pregnant women
  - Children aged 6-24 months
  - People with long-term medical conditions
  - People aged 50-64 years who are at risk of complications
  - Students attending special schools

For more information, contact the Health Protection and Disease Prevention Division on 020 8000 5000 or the National Immunisation Centre on 0208 0222/2/4.
Influenza Prevention

Influenza is a common infectious respiratory illness. You can catch it from other people by coming into contact with them. It is spread in droplets of fluid from infected people. You can also spread it by touching contaminated objects and then touching your nose or mouth with the contaminated hands.

Flu can give you any of the following symptoms:
- fever and shivering
- muscle aches
- headache
- loss of appetite
- tiredness
- cough
- runny nose
- sneezing
- hoarseness
- diarrhea
- vomiting

If you are normally fit and healthy:
- Stay at home
- Avoid contact with other family members
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes

If you are at high-risk for complications:
- Stay at home
- Avoid contact with other family members
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes
- Call your GP or local health service if you become unwell

There are different types of flu, and each type is treated with different medications. For example, some types of flu are caused by influenza A virus with a different subtype of hemagglutinin. Influenza B virus does not change often and usually causes milder symptoms than influenza A virus.

Difference between a cold and the flu:

Colds are caused by a cold virus. They are a common illness that affects many people. The flu is caused by a flu virus. It can lead to more serious illness, especially in people with underlying health conditions. The flu is more likely to cause fever, muscle aches, and fatigue.

Pre-symptoms:

- muscle pain
- fatigue
- headache

If you feel unwell, you should stay at home until you are well.

Cold symptoms:

- cough
- runny nose
- sore throat
- fever

If you feel well after 24 hours, you can return to work.

How do you catch the flu?

The flu is spread from person to person by contact with droplets containing the virus. Droplets are spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can survive on surfaces for up to 48 hours. Other people can catch the flu by: touching nose, mouth or eyes with contaminated hands;

Small droplets are suspended in air and can be inhaled by others.

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