

Flu (Influenza)

Influenza is a contagious disease caused by the influenza virus and is spread via coughing, sneezing, or respiratory secretions. The best way to prevent influenza (flu) is by getting the influenza immunization.

General Self-Care Measures:

- Stay in your room and do not attend classes if you have a fever. You may return to classes after being fever-free for 24 hours.
- Rest and increase your intake of clear fluids (water, broth, sports drinks, tea)
- If you live in the dorm, your RA can assist with getting foods and liquids from the Dining Halls.
- Contact your professors to let them know you are ill.
- If you smoke, vape, or juul, stop smoking while ill.

Sore Throat Care:

- Gargle with warm salt water several times a day for sore throat discomfort (1/4 teaspoon regular salt to 1/2 cup warm water)
- Increase fluids as tolerated
- Use cough drops, hard candy, or frozen popsicles for additional relief

Care for Fever/Headache/Muscle Aches:

- Chills and sweats often indicate a fever.
- The following will help to lower a fever and reduce headaches and body aches:
 - Consider taking Acetaminophen 325 mg (Tylenol®) 2 tablets every 4-6 hours per package directions or Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) 2 tablets every 4-6 hours per package directions.
 - For a fever > 101 degrees Fahrenheit, consider alternating your Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen, 2 tablets of each, no sooner than every 4 hours.
- Avoid aspirin with the flu because it can cause Reye's syndrome, a rare, but serious condition.

Nasal/Sinus Congestion Care:

- Consider taking a nasal/sinus decongestion per package directions such as Pseudoephedrine, (Sudafed®) (This can only be purchased at a pharmacy counter)

- Increase the humidity of your living space with a vaporizer or humidifier
- Breathe in steam (hot shower)
- Saline nasal spray (Ocean®, Deep Sea®, etc.) to moisturize nasal passages.
- Nasal/sinus irrigation (Sinus Rinse®, NetiPot®); these relieve sinus and nasal congestion and promote drainage.

Cough Care

- Consider taking an expectorant such as Guaifenesin per package directions.
- Increase the humidity of your living space with a vaporizer or humidifier
- Breathe in steam (hot shower) The humidity will help liquefy secretions so your body can cough up the phlegm.

Contact Health & Wellness at (603) 862-2856 when open or (603) 862-9355 when Health & Wellness is closed:

- For a temperature of 101 or greater lasting longer than 4 days
- Any symptoms lasting > 5-7 days
- If you are experiencing a severe headache, rash or stiff neck
- Anytime you are concerned about your symptoms
- If you have questions

YOU SHOULD SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Recurring dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve, but then return with fever or worsening cough

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IMPORTANT

You should always “read the directions” on all non-prescription medications, including those listed here, to ensure:

- correct dosing
- awareness of any warnings related to the non-prescription medication
- possible interactions with the medications you take on a daily basis
- possible interactions with any health conditions you may have.

Many multi-symptom medications contain several medications including Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen decongestants, and antihistamines. It is very important that you read the contents label to avoid overdosing yourself by using duplicate ingredients.

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FLU

- Avoid close contact with others who may be sick or if you are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough into your elbow
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Don't share toothbrushes, eating utensils, towels, drinking glasses or other items that might spread germs
- Take care of yourself by eating healthy meals and getting enough sleep
- Wear a mask until symptoms improve

Remember, the flu is caused by a virus and cannot be treated with antibiotics.

**Contact a Health & Wellness Health Resource Nurse at (603) 862-2856
For After Hours Care please call (603) 862-9355 (WELL)**