

Don't let germs hang around on cleaning cloths or towels, either! Choose paper towels that can be thrown away *OR* cloth towels that will be laundered after one use.

Other Things to Do...

When someone has the flu, keep everyone's personal items separate. Avoid sharing computers, pens, papers, clothes, towels, sheets, blankets, food and eating utensils. One person should be assigned to provide care to the family member who is ill. It may help for the caregiver to wear a mask when dealing with the person who is ill.



- Wear disposable gloves when in contact with or cleaning up body fluids or contaminated items such as tissues. Wash your hands immediately after removing your gloves.
- Use hot water for all laundry and wash your hands after handling dirty laundry.

Please, keep your germs to yourself!

Always cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze.

- Use a tissue instead of a cloth handkerchief.
- Place used tissues in the wastebasket and wash your hands right away.
- Don't use your bare hand to cover your cough. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper arm.

Remember:

Boosting your immune system by eating healthy foods, and getting enough rest and exercise can also help protect you against the flu.

For more information, visit health.ny.gov or cdc.gov



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When Someone at Home has the Flu



What
to DO?

Influenza (flu) is caused by a virus that spreads easily from person to person.

Flu causes symptoms including headache, chills and fever, cough or sore throat, and body aches. Some people can become seriously ill if they get the flu.

The best way to prevent the flu is to get flu vaccine each fall. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as vaccine is available. Additionally, there are other things you can do to reduce your risk of getting sick, especially if someone in your household is sick with the flu.

Recognize Flu Symptoms

Watch for these symptoms:

- Fever, chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches/pain
- Lack of energy
- Runny or stuffy nose

Unlike a cold, with symptoms that come on gradually, flu usually hits all at once. Fever and severe body aches are common. Call your health care provider if you think you or someone in your family has the flu. Information on treating many symptoms can be given over the phone. If you think you have the flu, stay home, unless you need medical care. In that case, wear a surgical or procedure mask to avoid spreading germs.

Wash Your Hands!

The germs that cause influenza are spread up to three feet when someone who has the flu coughs or sneezes. You can even spread flu germs when you speak. If you handle things the germs land on and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth, the flu virus can easily enter your body. Wash your hands often to get rid of flu germs.



How to clean your hands:

- Wet your hands and apply liquid, bar, or powder soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously to make lather and scrub all surfaces. Continue for 20 seconds! Need a timer? Imagine singing “Happy Birthday” all the way through– twice!
- Wash hands well with warm water and soap.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer.
- If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub, also called hand sanitizer!

Keep your hands away from your face.

Since you can't wash your hands all the time, make a habit of not touching your face. Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent germs from entering your body.

Clean and Disinfect Surfaces

Disinfecting surfaces will help kill flu germs. *Cleaning and disinfecting* are not the same thing! *Cleaning removes* germs. *Disinfecting destroys* them. Cleaning with soap and water to remove dirt and most of the germs is usually enough. But, when it comes to flu germs, you will want to disinfect for an extra level of protection. Use a household cleaner. Make sure the label says that it kills influenza viruses. If you do not have one, mix ¼ cup of chlorine bleach into one gallon of hot water to disinfect surfaces. Disinfect doorknobs, light switches, handles, telephones, toys and other surfaces people frequently touch such as tabletops, counters and chair backs.

DISINFECTANT: 1 gallon water with ¼ cup of bleach. Mix up a fresh batch every time you use it.

