



Avoiding the Flu



Getting sick is not fun; it only makes you miserable. Getting the flu can make you feel even more miserable. It can lead to pneumonia and other infections. The flu can make you miss work and school. Although it might not be possible to avoid all illnesses, there are steps you can take to lower the risks of getting them especially the flu.

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS:** Our hands pick up germs from all places. You get sick when you touch an infected surface and then touch your mouth, eyes or nose. Hand washing remove germs on your hands that can make you sick. Washing your hands take away germs that cause colds and flu, Hepatitis A, Meningitis, infectious diarrhea, pink eye and other infections.
2. **WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN**
 - a. Wash your hands before, during and after cooking or preparing food
 - b. Wash your hands after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose
 - c. Wash your hands before eating
 - d. Wash your hands after using the bathroom or changing a baby's diaper
 - e. Wash your hands when you are in close contact with someone who is sick
 - f. Wash your hands after touching animals or handling their waste.
 - g. Wash your hands when they feel or look dirty.
 - h. Wash your hands.....
3. **HOW TO WASH HANDS**
 - a. Wet your hands with warm water
 - b. Lather up both hands with soap
 - c. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Wash both your inner and the back of your palms, your wrist, your fingers and under the fingernails.
 - d. Rinse your hands thoroughly
 - e. Dry your hands on a clean paper towel. If available turn off the faucet with a paper towel. Let your hands air dry if no clean paper towel is available.
 - f. Use an alcohol base sanitizer if no soap is available.
4. **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF:** Eat healthy meals and exercise regularly and make sure you get at least 6-8 hours rest. Reduce stress as much as possible.
5. Cover your mouth when you sneeze, cough and yawn.
6. Avoid contact with people who have the flu.



SIGNS OF THE FLU

1. Fever and body aches
2. Runny nose and congestion
3. Cough
4. Headaches
5. Extreme tiredness
6. Sore throat
7. Nausea, diarrhea and vomiting. (common in small children)

If you get sick, please stay home and rest. Drink plenty fluids. Taking cold medication may help reduce fever and body aches. Vitamin C will help boost the immune system to help your body fight against the flu. Everyone should consider taking the influenza vaccine. Please consult your health care provider before taking the vaccine for any contraindications you might have to taking this vaccine.

References

Calhoun, N (2006). Avoiding the flu to avoid colds, flu and other infections. Journey Works Publishing: CA

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