

What you need to know about

The flu

Are you sure you use the right measures

to protect yourself against the flu?

Get vaccinated



What is the flu?

Seasonal flu is an infectious disease caused by influenza viruses which infect the air airways (nose, throat, bronchi and sometimes lungs). Specific population groups are more at risk of developing flu-related complications that may result in hospitalisation.

These risk groups are elderly people and those with chronic illnesses including:

- asthma and other respiratory diseases
- diabetes and other endocrine diseases
- heart diseases
- kidney diseases
- liver diseases
- metabolic diseases
- neurological diseases
- weakened immune system

For these risk groups annual vaccination in the autumn is recommended.

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How do I catch the flu?

The flu spreads from person to person:

- by direct contact through droplets from an infected person coughing or sneezing.
- by indirect contact when droplets or secretions from the nose or throat settle on surface areas such as hands. From there the virus can be transferred to other people who then touch their face.

How do I know I have the flu?

People who catch the flu often experience some or all of these symptoms:

- fever
- fatigue
- sore throat
- headache
- runny nose
- muscle ache
- dry cough

Although severe illnesses and complications from flu can occur in anyone, they are far more common among people in risk groups. Complications can include asthma, pneumonia, myocarditis, encephalitis and even death.

To avoid complications, vaccination is the most effective way of prevention.

How to keep yourself and others healthy this winter?

- get vaccinated before the flu season starts
- wash your hands regularly with soap and water
- try to avoid close contact with sick people

If sick,

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze
- if you do not have a tissue available, sneeze into your arm
- throw away tissues after use
- stay home when you are ill
- if you get worse, seek medical help