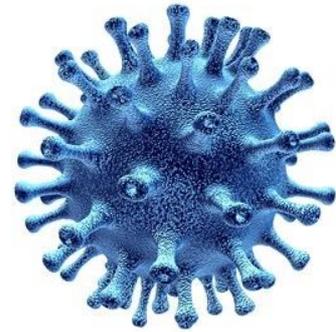


Got the flu? - what to do if you get sick

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How do I know if I have the flu?

You may have the flu if you have some or all of these symptoms: fever*, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, sometimes diarrhoea and vomiting.

*not everyone with flu will have a fever.

What should I do if I get sick?

Most people with the flu have mild illness and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs. If you get sick with flu symptoms, in most cases, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people except to get medical care. If, however, you have symptoms of flu and are in a high risk group, or are very sick or worried about your illness, contact the surgery in the usual way. People at high risk for complications should get antiviral treatment as early as possible, because benefit is greatest if treatment is started within 2 days after illness onset.

People at High Risk for Developing Flu-Related Complications

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old and adults 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant women (and women up to two weeks postpartum)
- Residents of nursing homes
- People who have medical conditions including: neurological disorders, lung disease such as COPD or asthma, heart disease, kidney or liver disorders, weakened immune systems or morbid obesity.

What are the emergency warning signs of flu sickness?

In children

- Fast breathing
- Bluish skin colour
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Drowsiness
- Being irritable
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In addition to the signs above, get medical help right away for any infant who has any of these signs:

- Being unable to eat
- Has trouble breathing
- Has no tears when crying
- Significantly fewer wet nappies than normal

In adults

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

Are there medicines to treat the flu?

Yes. There are drugs the practice may prescribe for treating the flu called “antivirals.” These drugs can make you better faster and may also prevent serious complications.

How long should I stay home if I’m sick?

We recommend that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever has gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of Paracetamol. You should stay home from work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

What should I do while I’m sick?

Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from infecting them. If you must leave home, for example to get medical care, wear a facemask if you have one, or cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Wash your hands often to keep from spreading flu to others. The pharmacy can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies. You can call 111 if you need further advice. The NHS choices website has further information on the flu. www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu

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