FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Fight the flu

FLU PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

What is the flu?
Influenza, also known as the flu, is a highly contagious respiratory virus. The effects of the flu vary from person to person and range from mild to severe. For those at greatest risk, the flu can lead to pneumonia, and can even be fatal.

What are the symptoms of the flu?
- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Chills
- Fatigue

How can I minimize my risk for getting the flu?
- Get a flu shot - everyone aged 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine each year.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizing rub.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Practice healthy habits eat nutritious foods, drink plenty of water, get enough sleep and exercise regularly.
- Don’t touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Disinfect commonly touched hard surfaces, like countertops, doorknobs, desks, phones and computer keyboards.
- Avoid contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, stay at home until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without help from over-the-counter medicine.

How can I fight the flu?
You can’t cure the flu with medication, but there are many ways to help you feel better. What you mostly need is time - time for your body’s immune system to battle with the virus that’s got you down. Take these steps to relieve to symptoms you experience:
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Take acetaminophen, ibuprofen or buffered aspirin for headaches, body aches or fever.
- Be considerate and avoid other people when your illness is in its most contagious stage.

FLU VACCINES

When should I get a flu shot?
It’s a good idea to get your flu shot as soon as it’s available. It takes about two weeks for your body to develop immunity from the flu shot.
Where do I get a flu shot?
You can get a flu shot at your health care provider’s office or any participating pharmacy, including at any of these locations:
• Albertsons/Sav-On
• Bi-Mart
• Fred Meyer/Kroger
• Providence Retail Pharmacies
• Safeway
• Walgreens

Are flu shots covered by insurance?
Flu shots are considered preventive care, which is fully covered at participating pharmacies. You can always check your plan information or call Customer Service with questions regarding where to receive your flu shot.

Can I get the flu from a flu shot?
No. Some people may get a mild reaction, such as a red or tender area where the vaccine was given.

Can I have an allergic reaction to the flu shot?
Serious allergic reactions to a flu shot are rare. But if you’ve ever had Guillain-Barre Syndrome or a serious allergic reaction to eggs, thimerosal or a previous flu shot, check with your health care provider to make sure a flu shot is safe for you.

Why do I need to get a flu shot every year?
There are two reasons for this:
1. New viruses appear each year, and vaccines are created to protect against the introduction of those new viruses.
2. Your body’s immunity to flu viruses diminishes over time, and so getting a flu shot at the start of every flu season is the best way to stay healthy.

For more information about the flu, visit ProvidenceHealthPlan.com/flu or call 503-574-7500.