



# Advice for Influenza Patients

## How Flu Spreads

The main way that influenza viruses are thought to spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose before washing their hands.

## If you have the flu

Stay home for 7 days after the start of illness, get plenty of rest and drink clear fluids to keep from being dehydrated. Water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants are good choices. Remember to cover coughs and sneezes and clean hands frequently

## Care of the sick person

Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house if possible. (For example, a spare bedroom with its own bathroom is ideal.) Keep the sickroom door closed, and have sick person wear a mask when in a common area of the house or around other people.

Unless necessary for medical care, persons with the flu should not leave the home when they have a fever or during the time that they are most likely to spread their infection to others (7 days after onset of symptoms in adults, and 10 days after onset of symptoms in children). If they must leave the home, they should wear a mask.

If possible, sick persons should use a separate bathroom - cleaned daily.

## Protect other people in the home

The sick person should not have visitors other than caregivers. A phone call is safer than a visit.

If possible, have only one adult in the home take care of the sick person.

Use paper towels for drying hands after hand washing or dedicate cloth towels to each person in the household. For example, have different colored towels for each person.



Be watchful for warning signs that might indicate you need to seek medical attention:

- Shortness of breath
- Change in level consciousness
- Chest pain
- Dehydration