

# Flu Fundamentals

**Seasonal Influenza:** A contagious respiratory illness caused by three types of influenza virus which infect the respiratory tract. Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes. The flu usually comes on suddenly and may include these symptoms:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, also can occur but are more common in children than adults.

Annual outbreaks of the seasonal flu usually occur during the late fall through early spring.

**Pandemic influenza:** A global outbreak of influenza that occurs when a new influenza A virus appears in humans, causes serious illness and then spreads easily from person to person worldwide.

**Sources:**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- World Health Organization

It's important to be prepared for emergencies that may disrupt commercial and community activities. Everyone should have an emergency plan and a disaster supplies kit with enough food and water to last for up to two weeks. For information on emergency planning for families, visit the following websites:

[www.midlandtexas.gov](http://www.midlandtexas.gov)  
[www.TexasPrepares.org](http://www.TexasPrepares.org) (English)  
[www.TexasPrepara.org](http://www.TexasPrepara.org) (Spanish).

**Sources:**

- Midland Health & Senior Services
- Texas Department of State Health Services



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Protect Your Family,  
Prevent Influenza**



**Midland Health & Senior Services**  
A Division of Community Services

3303 W. Illinois, Space 22  
Midland, TX 79703  
Phone: 432-681-7613  
Fax: 432-681-7634  
Website: <http://www.midlandtexas.gov/>  
Click on "City Services"  
Click: "Health Department"

## “Take 3” Actions To Fight The Flu



### Take time to get a flu vaccine.

- CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Seasonal flu vaccine also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from making them sick.



### Take everyday preventive actions.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other measures to keep our distance from each other to lessen the spread of flu.



### Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.

- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- The priority use for antiviral drugs this season is to treat people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with flu-like symptoms and who are at increased risk of serious flu complications, such as pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older and people with chronic health conditions.
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- Antiviral drugs are not sold over-the-counter and are different from antibiotics.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.

### **Source:**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention