



# UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTER

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## Influenza and Influenza-Like Illness

Influenza, (also called ‘the flu’) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. The virus typically infects the nose, throat, and lungs. It is spread mainly by droplets when people cough, sneeze, or talk. Less often, you can get the flu by touching something that has the flu virus on it and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose.

The best way to prevent the flu is by getting the flu vaccine every year. The live intranasal flu vaccine is no longer available due to concerns about its effectiveness.

### What should I do if I get the flu?

#### *Keep the virus from spreading to others*

- If your family home is close by, it may be wise to go home to recover.
- If you are sick, wear a mask to go to the bathroom or when you are in public, and wash your hands regularly.
- If you have a meal plan and live on campus, you can order “sick meals” by visiting: [www.dining.umd.edu/sick-meal/](http://www.dining.umd.edu/sick-meal/). A friend can pick up these meals for you.
- Clean high-touch surfaces in your room like keyboards, door knobs, etc., with an anti-bacterial or “Clorox” wipes.

#### *Treat Your Symptoms*

- Stay in bed! You don’t necessarily need to see a doctor. Fluids, rest, and fever reducers like Tylenol or Advil are what you need!
- If you choose Tylenol or acetaminophen, it should be taken at a dose of 650mg (2 regular strength tablets) every 6 hours.
- The Advil or ibuprofen dose is 600mg (3 tablets) every 6 to 8 hours with food.

- Aleve or naproxen can be taken as 2 tablets twice a day.
- Do not take aspirin!
- Generally speaking, you should not mix different medications unless instructed to do so by a health care provider.
- Try to drink at least 2 liters of fluid per day. This can include water, sports drink, soup, broth, ginger-ale -mix it up!
- Check your temperature at least twice a day or when you feel feverish. Stay isolated until your fever has resolved for 24 hours without the help of fever-lowering medication. This will take at least 4 days in most cases. A temperature above 100.4°F or 38°C is considered to be a fever.
- If you need medical advice after-hours, call (301) 314-9386 and a nurse will help to answer your questions.
- If you develop these symptoms, seek medical attention right away:
  - Trouble breathing,
  - Pain or pressure in the chest or belly,
  - Sudden dizziness, confusion,
  - Severe or persistent vomiting, or fever that returns a few days after going away.

Tamiflu is an oral antiviral that can be used to shorten the course and lessen the severity of the flu. Although resistance is currently low, overuse will reduce its effectiveness. The CDC currently recommends Tamiflu for members of the following groups:

- Hospitalized patients
- People with severe, complicated, or progressive flu
- People who are at higher risk of complications

**AFTER HOURS NURSE LINE**  
**(301) 314-9386**