

CDC SAYS:

“TAKE 3” ACTIONS TO FIGHT THE FLU

1 Vaccinate

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine by the end of October, if possible.
- Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.
- People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to high risk people.
- Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for them should be vaccinated instead.

2 Stop Germs

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu symptoms, 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.
- 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.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

3 Antiviral Drugs

- If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness.
- Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder).
- Antiviral drugs can shorten your illness and make it milder. They can also prevent serious flu complications, like pneumonia.
- It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early to treat people who are very sick with the flu (like people in the hospital) and people who are sick with the flu and at high risk for serious flu complications, either because of their age or because they have a high risk medical condition. Other people also may be treated with antiviral drugs by their doctor. Most otherwise-healthy people who get the flu, however, do not need antiviral drugs.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

fever	cough	sore throat	runny or stuffy nose
body aches	headache	chills	fatigue

VOICES OF MENINGITIS™

A Meningococcal Disease Prevention Campaign
from the National Association of School Nurses

In collaboration with Sanofi Pasteur

Get the Facts

What is meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal disease, which includes meningococcal meningitis, is a serious bacterial infection that strikes between 800 and 1200 Americans each year. Although rare, meningococcal disease can cause meningitis, swelling of the tissues around the brain or spinal cord; bacteremia, a severe blood infection; or pneumonia. Vaccination has been available for years and is a safe and effective way to help protect against this potentially devastating disease.

Who is at risk for getting meningococcal meningitis?

Although the disease occurs in all age groups, infants, adolescents and young adults, and people 65 years of age and older are at increased risk of contracting meningococcal disease.

How do you get meningococcal meningitis?

The bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are spread through respiratory droplets and direct contact with respiratory secretions. Common everyday activities can facilitate this spread, including kissing; sharing utensils and water bottles; and being in close quarters, such as living in a dormitory. Fatigue may also put people at greater risk of meningococcal disease, possibly by weakening the immune system.

What are symptoms of meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal meningitis can be hard to recognize, especially in its early stages, because symptoms are similar to those of more common viral illnesses. But unlike more common illnesses, the disease can progress quickly and may cause death in as little as 1 day. Symptoms may include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, confusion, vomiting, exhaustion, and/or a rash.

What can happen if you get meningococcal meningitis?

Although rare, meningococcal meningitis is serious and can potentially cause the death of an otherwise healthy young person within as little as 1 day after symptoms first appear. About 10 to 15 percent of the 800 to 1200 Americans who get meningococcal disease will die. Nearly 1 in 5 survivors are left with serious medical problems, including: amputation of arms, legs, fingers, or toes; neurological problems; deafness and kidney damage.

How can you help prevent your child from developing meningococcal meningitis?

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have shown that, following infancy, there is a second peak in meningococcal disease incidence among adolescents and young adults between 16 and 21 years of age. Even though the disease is rare, it can result in severe, permanent disabilities and death, so it is important to take every precaution to help protect against it.

To help protect against meningococcal disease, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends routine vaccination of adolescents 11 through 18 years of age (a single dose of vaccine should be administered at 11 or 12 years of age, with a booster dose at 16 years of age for children who receive the first dose before 16 years of age).

Getting the booster, which is recommended by the CDC but not required in many states, is a critical step when it comes to following the recommended vaccination schedule. The booster helps provide protection through adolescence into young adulthood, which is a time when the risk of meningococcal disease tends to increase.

Talk to your child's school nurse or health care provider about meningococcal meningitis prevention and visit www.Facebook.com/VoicesofMeningitis for more information.