

Community
HOSPICE
Peace • Hope • Compassion

The background of the slide features a microscopic view of influenza virus particles. The particles are spherical and covered in numerous spike-like projections (hemagglutinins) that extend from their surface. The color palette transitions from a deep blue on the left to a bright green on the right. A dark, semi-transparent horizontal band is positioned across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the title text.

INFLUENZA

What is Influenza?

- Contagious respiratory illness: infecting the nose, throat, and occasionally the lungs
- Can be mild or severe
- Two types of influenza (flu): Type A and Type B
- Seasonal influenza viruses are there all year-round, however the flu viruses are most common in the fall and winter

Statistics

- On average, roughly 8% of the United States population get sick from the flu each season
- It can range from 3% - 11% depending on the season
- The influenza virus is so common that the number of individuals infected each season can only be estimated
- 2019-2020: flu vaccination prevented roughly 7.5 million influenza illnesses and 6,300 influenza-associated deaths

Symptoms

- Flu symptoms usually happen suddenly
- Symptoms can include the following:
 - Cough
 - Fever or feeling feverish or having chills
 - Sore throat
 - Runny/stuffy nose
 - Muscle/body aches
 - Headaches
 - Fatigue



Contagiousness

- Most contagious in the first 3-4 days after illness starts
- Healthy adults may infect others beginning 1 day before the symptoms and up to 5 to 7 days after becoming ill
- Young children and people with weakened immune systems may be able to infect other people for a longer time
- The time from exposure and being infected with the flu to when symptoms start is roughly 2 days and can range from 1-4 days

Diagnosis

- If your doctor needs to know for sure that you are ill with the flu, laboratory tests can be done
- There are a number of flu tests available
- Most common flu test is the rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs)

Treatment

- Antiviral drugs can be used to treat the flu:
 - They are different from antibiotics and are not available over-the-counter
 - Can make flu illness milder and shorten time of illness
 - Antivirals work best when started within 2 days of getting sick

Complications of Influenza

- Bacterial pneumonia
- Ear infections
- Sinus infections
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions:
 - Asthma
 - Diabetes
 - Heart failure

How Does Influenza Spread?

- Mainly spread through tiny droplets when people with the flu sneeze, talk, or cough
- The droplets can land on other individuals mouths and noses
- Less common, flu can spread through touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching their nose, mouth, or eyes

Who is at Risk?

- Older people (65 years and older)
- Young children
- People with certain health conditions
 - Asthma
 - Diabetes
 - Heart Disease
- Pregnant women



How Can I Prevent Influenza?

- The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick
- If you are sick, limit contact with others
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands/use alcohol-based hand rub
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Clean and disinfect surfaces

Influenza Versus COVID-19

- Influenza and COVID-19 are contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses
- COVID-19 seems to spread more easily and causes more serious illnesses in some individuals
- Further differences are addressed in the next slides
- For more information, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm> or talk with your healthcare provider

Influenza Versus COVID-19

Influenza

- Flu viruses can cause both mild to severe illness and include some common signs and symptoms of:
 - Runny or stuffy nose
 - Headache
 - Cough
 - Fever

COVID-19

- Seems to cause more serious illness in some and other signs and symptoms may include change in or loss of taste or smell

Influenza Versus COVID-19

Influenza

- Approved treatments for the flu include prescription influenza antiviral drugs that are FDA-approved

COVID-19

- There are currently no drugs or other therapeutics approved by the FDA to treat COVID-19
- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has developed guidance on treatment of COVID-19

Influenza Verses Common Cold

IS IT A COLD OR FLU?

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

#FIGHT FLU

Flu Vaccine

- The flu vaccine reduces your risk of getting sick with the flu and maybe being hospitalized or even dying from the flu
- Fewer than half of Americans had received a flu vaccine and at least 410,000 individuals were hospitalized from the flu
- Most flu vaccines protect against 4 flu viruses that research determines to be the most common



Flu Vaccine

- It is recommended that everyone 6 months old and older should get an annual flu vaccine around the end of October
- Flu vaccination has been associated with decreased rates of some cardiac events among individuals with heart disease (especially those who had a cardiac event in the last year)



What if I Get Sick?

- Most people have mild flu and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs
- If you present with flu symptoms, stay home and avoid contact with others
- If you have symptoms of the flu and are in a high risk group, or very sick, contact your health care provider



Summary

- Influenza is a common virus that is present on a yearly basis
- It is important to take preventative measures to reduce your risk of getting the flu
- If you have symptoms of the flu and are in a high risk group, or very sick, contact your health care provider



References

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>



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