

**Wheaton College
Student Health Services**

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INFLUENZA FAQ's

WHAT IS THE FLU?

The flu is a short word for “influenza.” It is a group of viruses. The flu is a contagious infection caused by viruses that affect the nose, throat, and lungs. The disease can spread through communities quickly if good hygiene is not practiced.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU?

- Chills and moderate to high fever
- Muscle aches, including backache
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headache
- Fatigue

HOW DOES A FLU VIRUS SPREAD?

The virus germs are spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The germs get into the air, and nearby persons breathe in the germs. Flu can also spread by touching a surface that has the germs on it and then touching your nose or mouth. Adults are contagious 24 hours before symptoms and 24 hours after symptoms cease. Symptoms start 1 to 4 days after exposure.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- Wash hands often to prevent the spread of any germs. Use a hand sanitizer that has a 60% alcohol base.
- Clean public surfaces often (doorknobs, counter tops, etc.).
- Stay home if you are sick.

VACCINATIONS:

The flu vaccine is not a “live” vaccine. No one can get the flu from the vaccine. People with other underlying health concerns (asthma, diabetes, respiratory or immune problems) should be vaccinated. SHS has the flu vaccine. No appointment is necessary. The flu vaccine protects against the common influenza A and B viruses.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

Most people who get the flu get better in a week. A cough or tired feeling may last a little longer.

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF:

Symptoms get worse, such as higher fever, shaking, chills, chest pain with breathing, coughing that produces a yellow mucus, earache, sinus pain, neck pain or stiffness, severe nausea and vomiting, or shortness of breath.