

3 Flu Fighters:

Can You Afford to Be Out Sick?



T H E F L U A N D Y O U

Some flu seasons are worse than others.

A large-scale outbreak of seasonal flu or a pandemic such as novel H1N1 (swine flu) can cause major disruptions at work, in schools and in essential services. But it's possible to protect yourself and others with these three flu fighters.

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a viral infection. It usually produces symptoms similar to colds but is more severe and even fatal for some people. Flu-like symptoms usually include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, chills, muscle aches, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.

1 VACCINATION

Get a flu shot or use the flu nasal spray. Vaccination is especially important for those at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children; pregnant women; people with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease; people 65 and older; caregivers; and people with heavy contact with the public. Talk to your health care provider or local health unit.

2 PREVENTION

Take everyday preventive actions. As you go about your daily activities, be observant and take precautions to avoid sick people, contaminated objects, and spreading (or receiving) germs through coughing and sneezing. Keep your distance from other people.

3 ANTIVIRALS

Talk to your health care provider about prescription antiviral drugs. For some flu cases, these drugs can ease symptoms. They can also help prevent serious flu complications. Antiviral drugs work best if started within the first two days of symptoms.

If you have the flu, stay home and rest.