

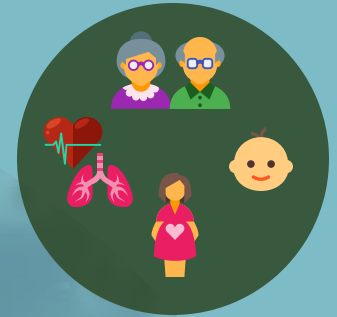
What is the flu?

Influenza, (the flu) is a contagious **respiratory illness** caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Influenza illness can last for more than 10 days.



How can I protect myself from the flu?

The single most important thing you can do to lower your risk of getting the flu or complications due to flu is to **get a flu shot**. CDC recommends this for anyone 6 months of age and older.



Who is at risk?

Some people are at high risk of developing serious flu-related complications if they get sick. This includes:

- People **65 years and older**
- people of any age with certain **chronic medical conditions** (asthma, diabetes, or heart disease)
- **pregnant** women
- **children** younger than 5 years.

Are you ready for flu season?

It's estimated that between 30,000 and 100,000 Montanans get the flu each year. Take action to protect yourself and those around you.



How do I protect my family?

In addition to getting an annual influenza vaccine, there are other things you can do to protect your family, friends, and coworkers including: **practice good hygiene, stay home if you are sick, and cover your cough.**



How bad will this flu season be?

It is not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. The timing, severity, and length of the season varies from one season to another.



What should I do if I still get sick?

The flu shot is your best defense against influenza. However, despite your best efforts, you still may get the flu. If that happens, **visit your healthcare provider** who may prescribe an antiviral medication to lessen the duration of illness.