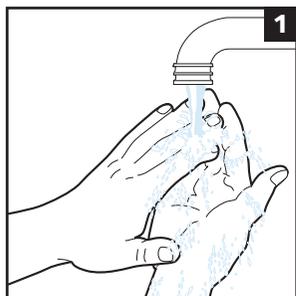
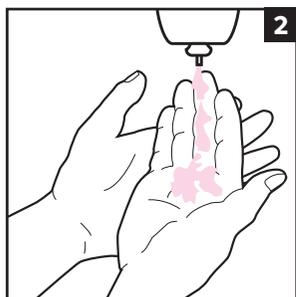


How do you prevent future infection of Influenza?



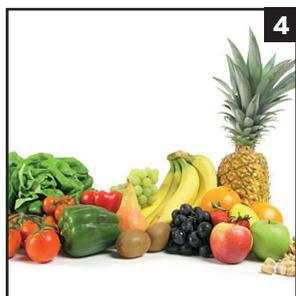
**1** Frequent hand washing with soap and water



**2** Hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand sanitizer



**3** Cover cough and sneeze by using fine tissue



**4** Eat a healthy diet



# Seasonal Influenza (Flu)



**Paediatric Pulmonology**

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## Seasonal Influenza (Flu)

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### What is Influenza (Flu)?

Influenza, commonly called “the flu” is an infection of the respiratory tract caused by influenza virus. Compared with most viral respiratory infections, such as common cold, influenza infection often causes a more severe illness.

### Signs and symptoms of influenza:

The typical symptoms of influenza include:

- Abrupt fever or high temperature.
- Cough.
- Sore and congested throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Headache or muscle ache.
- Severe tiredness and fatigue.

Although the symptoms and signs of the disease might be accompanied by nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, especially in children, these symptoms are normally rare. Most influenza inflicted patients completely recover within one or two weeks, however, some patients develop serious and potentially life-threatening health complications such as pneumonia. Influenza-related complications may occur at any age, but the elderly and people with chronic health problems are much more likely to develop serious complications after influenza infection than young or healthier people.

### Treatment for influenza (Influenza vaccination):

The best way to protect against influenza and avoid its serious and potentially life-threatening complications is to get a yearly flu shot vaccination. Flu vaccine is highly recommended, particularly for persons who are at high risk of having a serious complication when they get influenza.

### Why should you get an influenza vaccination every year?

1. The frequent and constant genetic change of influenza viruses over time.
2. The antiviral medicines effectiveness decreases over time and the impact diminishes after the lapse of one year from the date of vaccination. Influenza viruses are divided into three different strains and the vaccine contains the viruses which represent each strain. Every year the vaccine is updated to include the viruses that are most likely to circulate during the upcoming influenza season.

### When to get the influenza vaccine?

The flu virus may get active at any time of the year. Most seasonal flu activity, however, occurs between November and April. Then the activity of the viruses normally decreases up to December. The virus’s activity cycle recurs again between January and March. Hence, the flu vaccine should be taken from early September up to mid-November and the ideal time for the high-risk groups’ vaccination programs is from early October to mid-November. It takes about two weeks after vaccination to develop antibodies that provide protection against influenza virus infection.

### High-risk groups prone to develop serious Flu complications and are advised to take the seasonal Flu vaccine:

1. Adults 65 years of age and older.
2. Caregivers who provide care for the elderly or disabled people or any patient with a chronic disease.
3. Adults or children who have chronic heart diseases or chronic respiratory diseases, such as severe asthma, COPD or bronchitis.
4. People who need periodical medical follow-up for metabolic disorders, such as diabetes mellitus, renal or hepatic dysfunction, hemoglobinopathies, or immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications).
5. Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye’s syndrome after influenza virus infection.
6. Pregnant women, particularly those in their 3rd trimester, as there is good evidence to suggest that they have an increased risk of developing severe complications if they get flu.
7. Healthcare workers and medical first responders, like doctors, nurses or anyone who provides healthcare in a specialized setting like a hospital.