



Civil Air Patrol – USAF Auxiliary
La Crosse Composite Squadron
SAFETY NEWS



October 2017

STAY HEALTHY THIS FALL

Is it the Flu?

Fever, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, nausea: If these symptoms hit, you may have been bitten by the flu bug. Here is a good cold-flu comparison chart --

COMMON SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Fatigue	No	Yes
Fever	No	100 – 104 degrees F
Muscle Aches	No	Yes
Joint Pain	No	Yes
Loss of Appetite	No	Yes
Headache	No	Yes
Cough	Yes	Yes
Sore Throat	Yes	Yes
Stuffy Nose	Yes	No
Diarrhea/Vomiting	No	Possible

Who is Most Vulnerable?

During the 2014-15 flu season, people over age 65 comprised 60% of all cases of flu in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In February that year, the number of people over age 65 hospitalized for flu was the most since the CDC began recording those numbers in 2005.

Children from birth to age 4 represented the second-highest hospitalization rate.

A Flu Epidemic Every Year

Flu season occurs in the fall and winter, peaking between late November and early March, and it's an epidemic every year. The makeup of flu viruses can change from year to year, making it difficult to predict.

Flu spreads through droplets when people sneeze or cough, and on surfaces. People are contagious one day before symptoms appear and up to a week after.

When you don't feel well, it's best to take care of yourself by staying home. And don't go back to work or school for at least 24 hours after a fever is gone.

What Can You Do to Stay Healthy?

- CDC recommends everyone older than 6 months get an annual flu vaccine as soon as the vaccine becomes available; October is the ideal time to get vaccinated, but it's never too late
- If you don't like needles, ask your doctor if a nasal flu spray is available.
- Avoid being around sick people if possible.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, preferably with the inside of your arm rather than your hand.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated (door handles, countertops, etc.).

Death Rate from Flu

It is difficult to calculate the number of flu deaths annually, according to the CDC. States are not required to report flu deaths, not everyone who dies with flu symptoms is tested for flu, and the virus can cause death when other health conditions are present.

About 5% to 20% of people in the U.S. get the flu each year, and an average of 200,000 people are hospitalized for it annually. Flu-related deaths range from about 3,000 to 49,000 a year, depending on the severity of the outbreak.

Flu Vaccines

There are three different influenza vaccine* production technologies approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

- egg-based flu vaccine
- cell-based flu vaccine
- recombinant flu vaccine

All commercially available flu vaccines in the United States are made by private sector manufacturers. Different manufacturers use different production technologies, but all flu vaccines meet FDA safety and efficacy requirements. The different vaccines are approved with different indications.

Keep yourself and others safer by getting a flu shot. Remember - vaccines do not give people the flu. For more information about how flu vaccines work*, visit the CDC website.

**** Sources: National Safety Council and Center for Disease Control**

Semper vigilans!

Major Linda L. Zimmerman, CAP

Safety Officer

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