

Monthly Health Challenge™

Protect Yourself from the Flu



CHALLENGE
Take action to prevent the flu

Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Protect Yourself from the Flu."
2. Take action to prevent the flu on at least 22 days this month.
3. Keep up this habit for a lifetime of good health!.

If you pick up a wrench to fix a car, carry your groceries in a paper bag, or step on the brakes at a stop light, you can thank a handful of 1918 inventors for the torque wrench, grocery bag, and hydraulic brakes. Not long after these modern-day conveniences emerged, the pop-up toaster and kitchen blender followed. But these inventions didn't enjoy a viral ad campaign or prime-time product release like they would today. News about a peace treaty that could end World War I dominated the headlines. Then came the 1918 flu pandemic.

Are You Prepared to Fight the Flu?



What started out as a few isolated cases of cold and flu-like symptoms quickly spread around the world. In no time, it literally went viral. In a matter of months, the flu sickened 500 million people and an estimated 50 million people died. Nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population was infected.

Public health officials tried to curb the spread of the deadly virus. People wore masks and avoided handshakes. Many

schools, churches, and businesses were closed. New York City even enlisted the help of the Boy Scouts to enforce a city code that made spitting illegal.

How much do you know about the influenza virus? Take this quiz to find out.



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1. An estimated 10,000 people in the United States die every year from influenza, and more than 50,000 are hospitalized.
2. The flu is contagious one day before any symptoms appear, and up to a week after becoming sick.
3. If you're healthy, eat a balanced diet, and exercise regularly, you probably won't get the flu.
4. After receiving the flu vaccine, it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop to protect you from getting sick.
5. The flu is most commonly spread through coughing and sneezing. It's also possible to get the flu from infected surfaces and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose.

The flu can be very serious, especially for the elderly, small children, and people with a weakened immune system. About 36,000 people die every year from the flu, and more than 200,000 are hospitalized. Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu and minimize complications if you do get sick.

Answers: 1. false 2. true 3. false 4. true 5. true

Twenty years after the flu pandemic, researchers Jonas Salk and Thomas Francis developed the first flu vaccine. However, strains of the flu virus are still around. Will you get sick or stay healthy this season? Take this month-long Health Challenge to Protect Yourself from the Flu.

Avoid Going Viral During Flu Season

Viral videos of pets, pranks, and people viewed millions of times on YouTube may be worth a few laughs, but the influenza virus isn't something you want to get or spread around. One microscopic droplet of the virus can make you sick. Your best defense is to avoid exposure to the flu virus and strengthen your immune system by getting the flu vaccine.

More →

How Does the Flu Spread?

It's been almost 100 years since the flu pandemic began in 1918. Since then, researchers have studied flu virus samples preserved from the pandemic to develop vaccines and better understand how it spreads. Here's how you can get infected:

Coughing and Sneezing

When a person infected with the flu talks, coughs, or sneezes, tiny droplets of the virus are released into the air. If the virus reaches your mouth, eyes, nose, or an open sore, you could become infected. This is the most common way the flu virus spreads.

Kissing

If you kiss someone who has the flu, the virus can be transferred from person to person in saliva.

Infected Animals

Birds, pigs, horses, ferrets, dogs, and cats can all be infected with various strains of the flu virus and transfer it to humans.

Contaminated Surfaces

The flu virus can survive on non-porous surfaces like doorknobs, handrails, keyboards, shopping carts, ATM machines, and toilets for about one to two days after being contaminated. Touching these surfaces can transfer the virus and lead to infection.

Video – How to Wash Your Hands
www.cdc.gov/cdctv/handstogether/



10 Ways to Protect Yourself from the Flu

1. Get a flu shot.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the flu vaccination is the single best way to prevent seasonal flu. Most people six months of age or older should get the flu vaccine.



Find the flu vaccine in your area
vaccinefinder.org

2. Wash your hands well and often.

After the flu vaccine, this is your next best defense against the flu. Lather up with soap, scrub for at least 20 seconds, and use hot water to rinse. If soap isn't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



Learn how to avoid the flu
www.cdc.gov/flu

3. Avoid close contact with anyone with the flu.

If you're sick, stay home, and isolate yourself from other household members. Avoid being around others who are sick.

4. Use disinfectant spray to keep surfaces that your hands might touch clean.

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5. Don't share food or "community" items.

Don't eat after double dippers, sip from someone

else's straw, share a drinking glass, or use a community hand towel.

6. Get plenty of quality sleep.

Aim for at least 7 hours a night. Your immune system can't fight the flu if you're fatigued.

7. Practice proper stress management.

Enjoy time with friends. Laugh. Listen to music. All of these things decrease stress hormones which can strengthen your immune system.

8. Use hot water to wash clothes and dishes.

Studies show that washing dishes and laundry using hot water

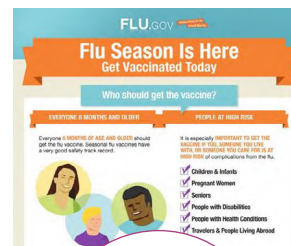
is 30 percent more effective at killing germs than cold water. Adding bleach to laundry can also help stop the flu virus from spreading.

9. Be physically active.

Regular exercise helps lower your risk of catching a cold by strengthening your immune system. If you do get sick, you'll likely experience milder symptoms and be sick fewer days. Keep in mind that too much exercise can weaken the immune system.

10. Eat well.

Choose a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and healthy protein foods. They contain nutrients that help build a strong immune system.



Infographic
– Flu season is here
tinyurl.com/kr46zjs

Getting the flu vaccine and following these tips to stay healthy will help you prevent the flu and recover faster if you do get sick.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.; National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.; National Institutes of Health.; National Institute of Nursing Research.



Protect Yourself from the Flu

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Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you take action to prevent the flu.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to help preventing the flu become a regular part of your life.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you took action to prevent the flu. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
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_____ Number of days this month I took action to prevent the flu
 _____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Signature _____ Date _____



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