



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

Fact Sheet

The **single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get [vaccinated \(keyfacts.htm\)](#)** each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are **[flu antiviral drugs \(antiviral/index.htm\)](#)** that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.

1. Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

3. Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Printable Materials for Promoting Good Health Habits

- [Cover Your Cough \(http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm\)](http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm)
- [Be a Germ Stopper: Healthy Habits Keep You Well \(http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/\)](http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/)
- [Flu Prevention Toolkit: Real People. Real Solutions \(http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/toolkit\)](http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/toolkit)
- [Stopping the Spread of Germs at Home, Work & School \(http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm\)](http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm)

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National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/about/>)

