

Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

The single best way to prevent getting any type of flu is to get [a flu shot as soon as the vaccine becomes available](#). It is also important to practice good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often with soap and water to help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu.

In certain circumstances, antiviral medications may prevent the flu. If you have the flu, your healthcare provider will be able to determine if antivirals will help you.

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 cough or sneeze.

Cough or sneeze into your shoulder or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.

4. Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often with soap and water 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 foods.