

Flu (influenza)



**Lorain County
Public Health**

For the Health of Us All

Influenza, commonly called the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.

- It can cause mild to severe illness, and can cause people to:
 - Miss work for several days or weeks.
 - Be hospitalized or die if severe.
 - Suffer complications, such as: sinus and ear infections, pneumonia, or worsened chronic health conditions (heart and lung disease, asthma, and/or diabetes)
- Older people, younger children, and people with compromised immune systems are at high risk for serious flu complications.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Headache
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Muscle aches
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Extreme tiredness

Flu is contagious:

- The virus is spread through droplets in the air from an infected person coughing and sneezing.
- It can also spread by someone touching an item with the virus on it and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.

How to prevent the flu?

- **Everyone should get a flu shot every year to prevent the flu.**
- Other ways to protect yourself from the flu virus:
 - Avoid contact with infected people.
 - Wash things that an infected person comes in contact with.
 - Wash hands often.

Should anyone not get a flu shot?

- There are some people who should not get a flu vaccine:
 - Children under 6 months of age because they are not old enough for the vaccine.
 - People with severe, life-threatening allergies to vaccine ingredients.

Older adults:

- People 65 years of age and older can get a high-dose flu shot for added protection.
- Human immune defenses weaken with age, which puts older adults at greater risk of severe illness and complications from the flu.

Call Lorain County Public Health with questions and to find out where to get a flu shot in late fall or early winter.

Rev. 07/18

Lorain County Public Health

9800 South Murray Ridge Road, Elyria, OH 44035 PHONE (440) 322-6367 FAX (440) 322-0911 LorainCountyHealth.com