



Courtesy and Common Sense: Tips for Preventing the Flu

Considering the unusually high incident rate and severity of the flu this season, key prevention strategies are more important than ever. Getting the [flu vaccine](#) is the most important measure you can take, but there are certain strains against which it's not as effective. And it's possible to contract the flu even with the vaccine, which means those common sense prevention tips your mother kept reminding you of for all those years really are important. Remember, when it comes to preventing the flu, it's all about the golden rule. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." In other words, be courteous and considerate of the people around you. Remember, they don't want the flu anymore than you do, and, by the way, flu season isn't over until mid-March.

Cover up

The next time you feel like sneezing or coughing, do everyone a favor and cover your [nose and mouth](#) with a tissue and throw it in the trash right away. This is the time-honored, tried-and-true way to prevent the spread of germs. The very next thing you should do is wash your hands with soap and water to make sure you don't pass germs along by hand. Use anti-bacterial wipes or lotion to protect you from picking up the flu virus, which you'll pass along to your mouth and nose.

Give sick people their space

It seems like an obvious precaution, but staying clear of people who have the flu will minimize the likelihood that you'll pick it up and pass it along to others. One of the best things you can do for those around you is to stay home if you're sick. People are often tempted to "be tough" and work through their illness. It may seem like you're being conscientious and dedicated, but it's actually one of the most inconsiderate things you can do if you have the flu. Schools and offices are perpetual germ factories. Spending hours on end in close proximity to others makes it quite probable that you'll make others sick, too. You need time to recover, which means taking care of yourself in a germ-free environment. Also, consider making arrangements online for grocery and pharmacy delivery.

Sleep it off

Sleep is the best thing you can do if you have the flu. It helps boost your immune system and strengthens your cells and organs. The [achiness and fatigue](#) you feel are indications that your body needs to shut down for a while. Try to remember that the world will go on without you and that your health should always be your most important consideration. So settle in, watch your favorite movies, and stay in bed for a while. It's a nice thing to do for those around you and for yourself.

Cover your tracks

If you feel like you might be getting sick, clean and disinfect things you come in contact with frequently. Remember, people can pick up germs from a doorknob or coffee pot handle you've touched, so try to be mindful of not leaving a trail of germs behind. You can fight off the flu by getting plenty of sleep, drinking lots of [fluids](#), and eating healthy foods.

Don't neglect your pup

It can be easy to overlook your furry friend when you're feeling lousy. That's why a [dog-walking](#) or dog-sitting service can come in so handy. They'll make sure your pet gets the attention and care he needs, and relieve you of having to feed and take him outside for bathroom breaks.

Common sense

The results of this season's flu outbreak offers proof that the flu should always be taken seriously. Take care of those around you by taking care of yourself. Use common sense, follow your mother's advice, and be good to yourself.

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