



How you can reduce the spread of influenza

How influenza is spread

Influenza (flu) viruses spread through invisible droplets. It spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes near another person. Spreading influenza requires close contact between infected and uninfected persons because droplets from coughs and sneezes travel less than two metres and do not stay in the air. Surfaces contaminated by droplets become a source of infection. Getting these droplets onto your hands and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes can spread influenza.

People with influenza are infectious while they have symptoms

- Influenza immunization is the most important way to prevent getting or spreading influenza
- Hand washing helps prevent infection
- Avoid contact with others when you have influenza

Hand washing

- Wash your hands frequently throughout the day and especially before preparing food or eating, after going to the toilet, and after coughing or sneezing into your hands or facial tissue. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 15 seconds including the thumbs, under the nails and the back of the hands.
- You may wish to supervise or help young children wash their hands thoroughly. Children may be reminded that they should use at least as much time hand washing as it takes to sing Happy Birthday To You or the ABCs.

Cover your cough

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve, or into a tissue
- After you cough or sneeze into your hands or facial tissue, wash your hands

Avoid contact with others when you have influenza

- If you have any symptoms of influenza, especially a new or worsening cough, avoid contact with others.
- If you have influenza symptoms such as a cough and must be around others, wash your hands before being with them and be sure to cover your cough. Also, be sure to maintain a distance of two metres (six feet) between you and them as much as possible.
- Consider limiting personal greetings such as hand shaking, hugging, and kissing.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you think your child may have the flu, or you have questions call:

- Your doctor, nurse or nursing station
- Health Links – Info Santé at 788-8200 (toll free 1-888-315-9257)

[from: <https://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/a-z/influenza/reduce-spread.php>]