

Preparing Your Home for Flu Season

Flu season is here, and the news is buzzing about the current strains, vaccinations, and pandemic possibilities. While there is no cure for the flu and no way to predict who will and won't be impacted by the flu, taking precautions like preparing yourself and your home can decrease the impact of flu season.



STOCK UP

Now is the time to be sure you have the supplies you will need if you or someone in your family gets sick. Cold medicines, pain relievers, a thermometer, and tissues are must haves. The flu can come on quickly and, by having medicines on hand, you can

get right to bed at the first sign of symptoms.

Be sure to have broth, soup, juice, and sports drinks in stock. These will help you bounce back if you catch the flu. If you there are other comfort foods you like to have when you are sick, make sure you have extras in the pantry.

The government currently recommends having at least a three-day supply of food and water on hand for every member of the household. This applies to any emergency situation including a flu pandemic.



CLEAN UP

The best way to decrease your chances of getting the flu is to keep your environment as germ free as possible. Germs can be found on every surface you touch. Use disinfectant wipes on doorknobs, phones, and remote controls, as well as surfaces in kitchen and

bathroom areas. Keep a supply at work, and wipe things down at least once per day.

Keep your hands clean. You can catch the flu by touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Wash your hands often and, if water is not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizing gel. Clean hands protect you and your family from spreading germs.

If someone in your home has the flu, try to keep them isolated. Remove garbage, plates, silverware, and soiled laundry regularly. Take the extra step to wash things immediately. A germey plate in the sink can infect an entire family. Use disinfecting wipes and sprays in and around the isolated person's room. Be sure to wash dishes and laundry in hot water and use high heat when drying.



GET HEALTHY

Your chances of catching the flu increase when your resistance is down. If you do not have the flu now, you can protect yourself. Eat right, exercise, get plenty of sleep, take vitamins, drink plenty of water, and avoid stress to

boost your immune system. If you have any chronic conditions, check with your doctor to be sure you are doing everything you can to control your health.

Talk to your doctor about receiving a flu shot. Each year shots provide resistance for the most recent strains of flu. A flu shot does not guarantee you won't get the flu; however, it will provide you with extra protection against some strains.



MAINTAIN A DISTANCE

A cough or sneeze can spread germs within several feet. During flu season, make sure you put a little bit more distance between you and others to minimize the spread of germs. It is also

appropriate not to shake hands, hug, or kiss someone. These recommendations apply in social, business, and religious settings.

Distance is particularly important in public places, such the line at the supermarket or public transportation. Bring disinfectant wipes to the supermarket to clean off grocery cart handles and wipe down baskets before you place food in them.

You may wish to cut back on activities that put you in contact with others, such as eating out, grabbing take-out, or visiting a salad bar. There are many steps to food preparation we never see. One sick person coming in contact with your food during this process can make you sick.

Preparation and prevention can help minimize the chances you or your family members catch the flu. Some extra cleaning and few changes in your daily habits can go along way to protecting yourself during flu season.

GETTING HELP

For help with personal or workplace issues, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). These confidential services are available to employees and their eligible household members 24/7.