




How should I wash my hands?

Using soap with warm water.

- Wet your hands with warm water. Apply a small amount of soap onto your hands.
- Rub your hands together until soap forms a lather and then rub all over your hands including your thumbs, in between your fingers and the area around and under the fingernails.
- Rinse your hands well under running warm water.
- Dry your hands using a paper or clean towel. Hot air dryers can be used in public areas.

Using alcohol hand Gel

- You may use this if your hands are not visibly dirty.
- Use enough alcohol hand gel to coat your hands and rub together making sure that all parts of the hands are covered.

How can I contact a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team?

Tell the Clinical Nurse Manager, Doctor or Nurse looking after you if you would like to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team and they will contact us.

We have made every possible effort to make sure that all the information provided in this leaflet is true, accurate, complete and up to date at the time of publication

Additional information can be found at :

<http://intranet.tuh.ie/departments/IPC/Pages/home.aspx>



Tallaght University Hospital

Ospidéal Ollscoile Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Flu

(Influenza)



What is flu?



Flu is a common infection caused by the Influenza virus. It is an infectious respiratory illness. Flu can occur throughout the year but usually peaks in Winter.

Who is at risk of Flu?

Flu can affect all ages however it can have more serious effects if you are over the age of 65, very young children and those with long term medical conditions.

What can I do to avoid getting the flu?

The single most important thing you can do to prevent getting seriously sick with flu is get the flu vaccine. If you have a long term medical condition or are 65 years or older, contact your GP about vaccination. Healthcare workers should also be vaccinated.

Simple hygiene measures can help prevent flu from spreading:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing
- Place tissue in a bin after use
- If you do not have a tissue? Cough or sneeze into your elbow not your hand
- Clean your hands regularly

How does flu spread?

Flu usually spreads person to person by droplets when people with flu cough and sneeze. These droplets land on mouths and nose of people who are nearby. It can also spread by touching a surface/object with the flu virus on it and then by touching the mouth, eyes or nose.

Flu can be contagious from one to two days before the symptoms start and a person can continue to spread the flu virus to others for up to one week after the symptoms begin.

People needing intensive care, patients on chemotherapy or those with a weak immune system may spread the virus for longer.

What are the symptoms of Flu?

People who have flu often have some or all of the following symptoms:

- High temperature or feeling feverish with chills
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Sore muscles and joints
- Headache
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Feeling tired
- People can also have nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, though this is more common in children

Antibiotics do not work against the flu virus!

Contact your GP if you are:

- Over 65 years
- Have a long term illness
- Have a child under two years with flu like symptoms
- Feeling very unwell

I have symptoms of flu what should I do?

Patient in a healthcare facility

Tell your doctor and nurse about your symptoms so they can send a swab to the laboratory to check if you have the flu virus.

You may need to stay in a room on your own or with the curtains pulled between your bed and the bed beside you to help prevent it spreading to other patients. All healthcare workers caring for you will be wearing a face mask to protect them from the flu virus

All healthcare workers should clean their hand before and after caring for you

Visitors

- Must not visit the Hospital if they have flu
- Stay indoors, keep warm and rest
- Drink plenty of fluids

