

Flu facts and information from the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center

Flu season is here and the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center has provided this fact sheet on influenza.

Influenza (flu) is caused by a virus and easily spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing and touching contaminated surfaces. The virus can enter your body through your mouth, nose or eyes. Once you have been exposed to the virus, it takes two weeks for flu symptoms to appear. Symptoms include:

? fever/chills	? sore throat	? muscle aches	?
headache			
? cough	? fatigue	? nasal congestion	

University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center wants to help the community prevent the spread of germs and help you decrease your chance of getting the flu. Here are a few quick tips to help you stay healthy and protect others.

Wash Your Hands

Good hand hygiene is the #1 way to protect yourself from germs. Clean your hands often with an alcohol-based hand cleaner or with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.

Respiratory Etiquette

Cover your nose and mouth with your upper shirt sleeve (cough and sneeze into your elbow) or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue in the trash and

wash your hands.

Get Vaccinated

Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses that are in the vaccine. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season.

If You Get Sick...

If you develop influenza like signs and symptoms or are sick at all, do not report to work or school; stay home!

Thank you for following these simple measures. They will help prevent the spread of flu and other respiratory infections.

This information was provided by Leigh Chapman, RN, MS, CIC, Director, Infection Prevention & Vascular Access.