



Below are the most commonly asked medical questions in a few seasonally-relevant topics. We hope you find this helpful. **Please note: to properly diagnose your medical condition, it is necessary that you consult with a physician. If you are in need of a primary care provider, please call (812) 332-4468. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.**

Cold and Flu Season

What is the influenza virus (the flu)?

The flu is a respiratory illness that most commonly affects the nose, throat, and lungs.

How do I know if I have the flu or just a cold?

If you have a cold, the most common symptoms are a runny or stuffy nose. When you have the flu, symptoms typically include a fever, body aches, tiredness, and a very dry cough. Flu symptoms are much more intense than those of a common cold.

Is the flu virus contagious?

Yes. The flu virus spreads most commonly by coughing, sneezing, and talking.

What is the best way to prevent getting the flu?

The best way to prevent the influenza virus is to get vaccinated.

When should I get the flu vaccine?

You should get vaccinated as early as possible. Flu vaccines are usually available beginning in September.

What does the flu vaccine protect me against?

The flu vaccine will protect you against the three flu viruses that are expected to be the most common for the 2011-2012 flu season (including H1N1).

What are other steps I can take to protect my family during this year's cold and flu season?

To protect your family against the flu and the common cold, you should always cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing. Be sure to wash your hands often with soap and water, limit your contact with people who are sick, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.

To learn more, and to see a complete listing of information, please follow the link below:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/>