



*Touching Hearts* & *Enriching Lives*



## What is the Flu?

### *What are the signs and symptoms of the flu?*

- Fever
- Cough
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Sore Throat
- Body Aches
- Headache

### *How the Flu Spreads*

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it & then touching their own mouth, eyes or probably their nose.

### *Period of Contagiousness*

You may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop & up to 5 to 7 days **after** becoming sick. Some people, especially young children & people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.

### *How Serious is the Flu?*

Flu is unpredictable & how severe it is can vary widely from one season to the next depending on many things, including:

- what flu viruses are spreading
- how much flu vaccine is available
- when vaccine is available
- how many people get vaccinated &
- how well the flu vaccine is matched to flu viruses that are causing illness.

### *Complications of Flu*

Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration & worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

### *How to Stop the Spread of Germs*

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth & nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean your hands.

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*We treat our patients like family*

