

Live Well Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life

STAYING SAFE DURING FLU SEASON

Staying Safe During Flu Season

One in 10 people in the United States will get the flu in a given season, according to estimates from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). And while viruses can live year-round, flu activity tends to rise in October and then peak between December and February. With COVID-19 a factor this year, it's even more important to take precautions to prevent the flu from spreading.

Here are 10 ways to keep safe:

1. **Get vaccinated if you can.** Vaccination is the most important way to [prevent the spread of the flu](#). It takes about two weeks for flu antibodies to develop, so the time to get a shot is before peak flu season.
2. **Stay home if you're sick.** The CDC recommends that individuals who have a fever and respiratory symptoms [stay at home until 24 hours after their fever ends](#) (100 degrees Fahrenheit or lower) without the use of medication. Not everyone who has the flu will have a fever. Other symptoms can include a runny nose, body aches, headache, fatigue, diarrhea or vomiting.
3. **Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds.** When using soap and water, rub soapy hands together for at least 20 seconds, rinse with water and dry completely. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub until you can wash your hands.
4. **Continue practicing social distancing.** Staying at least 6 feet apart from co-workers, whenever possible, can help prevent the spread of the flu.
5. **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or upper sleeve.** Tissues should go into a "no-touch" wastebasket. Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. Avoid touching your face.
6. **Keep frequently touched surfaces clean.** Commonly used surfaces such as counters, door handles, phones, computer keyboards and touchpads should be cleaned after each use.
7. **Limit shared equipment, or clean equipment before others use it.** Avoid using a co-worker's phone, desk, office, computer or other equipment unless they are cleaned with a disinfectant approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.



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8. **Follow workplace protocols.** Make sure you understand your workplace's policy regarding how to stay healthy at work during flu season.
9. **Wear a face covering.** These can help limit the flu's spread.
10. **Consider alternate work arrangements.** If you're concerned about your health, talk to your manager about alternate work arrangements, such as telework or staggered shifts to protect yourself or co-workers considered high risk for seasonal flu (such as older workers, pregnant women and workers with asthma).

Learn more about workplace safety and the flu on OSHA's website. You can find additional resources and learn more about OSHA's response to the coronavirus at [osha.gov/coronavirus](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus).

If you have questions or concerns about workplace safety, contact OSHA online or by phone at 1-800-321-6742 (OSHA).

Source: Adapted from the U.S. Department of Labor Blog.

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