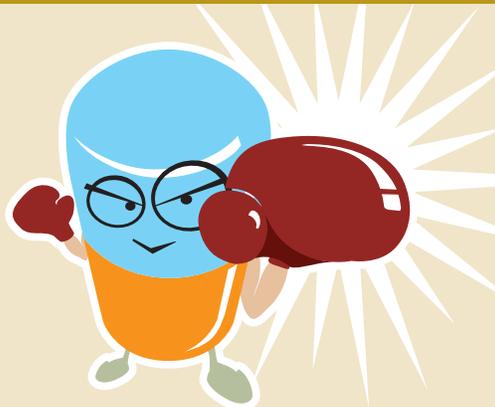


For Your Benefit

FEBRUARY 2015

NEWS & NOTES



Flu Fight

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommends that you:

- **Get vaccinated.**
- **Stay home if you're sick.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that those who have a fever and respiratory symptoms stay home until 24 hours after their fever ends without the use of medication.
- **Wash your hands frequently.** Use soap and water and wash for a full 20 seconds. If they are not available, use an alcoholbased hand rub.
- **Avoid touching the nose,** mouth, and eyes.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue,** or cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve.
- **Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean,** such as phones and computer equipment.
- **Try not to use a coworker's phone,** desk, office computer, or other work tools and equipment. If you must, clean the device first with a disinfectant.

SAD news

Take steps to fight seasonal affective disorder (SAD)



SAD is a specific form of depression that occurs during months with short daylight hours. Here's how you can make it through to sunnier days.

- **Bring the sunshine in.** Clean the windows and adjust window coverings to allow as much sunlight into your workspace as possible.
- **Go outside—especially on sunny days.** If it's really cold, even just 10 minutes of sunlight can lift your mood. Get moving. Exercise enhances mood, so try some simple stretching exercises during microbreaks. Consider attending fitness classes in the winter months.
- **Go outside and get moving.** The combination of being outdoors and moving can double the positive effect. When the weather is nice, take a walk outside during breaks. Propose taking a walk during meetings or brainstorming sessions as well.
- **Improve nutrition.** One common symptom of depression is a craving for high-carbohydrate foods. Be deliberate about continuing to eat proteins, fruits, and vegetables.
- **Improve rest.** Depressive moods can interfere with sleeping. Make sure to stick to the sleeping routine that works for you. Perhaps add a soothing tea, such as chamomile, to warm you up and calm you down before bedtime.
- **Plant happiness.** Green plants in the work environment improve both air quality and mood, so add a few ferns or a fig tree.

DO YOU KNOW your flu facts?

Some answers may surprise you

Take the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's seasonal flu quiz.

1. A flu vaccine cannot give you the flu. **True or False**
2. The "stomach flu" and influenza are the same thing. **True or False**
3. Getting a flu vaccine later than December is not too late. **True or False**
4. Flu viruses change constantly, which requires that a new flu vaccine be produced each year. **True or False**
5. Washing your hands is the best thing you can do to protect against the flu. **True or False**
6. The flu vaccine protects against three strains of flu. **True or False**
7. The flu is typically spread through droplets from coughs and/or sneezes. **True or False**
8. The flu is not a serious illness. **True or False**
9. The flu vaccine is available as a shot or a nasal spray. **True or False**
10. You can spread the flu to others before you have symptoms. **True or False**

ANSWERS

1. TRUE. The viruses in the vaccine are either killed (flu shot) or weakened (nasal spray vaccine), which means they cannot cause infection.
2. FALSE. The flu is a respiratory (lung) disease. Flu symptoms are fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, and muscle aches. Stomach symptoms can occur but are more common in children than adults.
3. TRUE. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people get vaccinated as soon as a vaccine is available and that vaccinations continue through the season. Flu activity usually peaks in February, but can occur as late as May.
4. TRUE.
5. FALSE. CDC recommends a flu vaccine as the most important step in protecting against the flu. However, preventive actions like covering your cough and washing your hands are important steps to help stop the spread of germs.
6. TRUE. The flu vaccine protects against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during flu season.
7. TRUE.
8. FALSE. Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in the United States, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and 36,000 people die from flu.
9. TRUE. The nasal spray flu vaccine is an option for healthy people ages 2 to 49 years old who are not pregnant.
10. TRUE. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick.

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