

Tips for College Students and Staff during Flu Season

Did you know that a single droplet of the influenza virus, suspended in the air, can infect you if it comes into contact with your nose, mouth, or eyes? The best way to protect against the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. Everyone who is at least 6 months of age should get a flu vaccine this season. Here are some tips to preventing flu.

#1 Get vaccinated

This is the first and most important step. If you have not already, get vaccinated as soon as possible. Because the flu virus is circulating in our community, it is crucial to get vaccinated to protect yourself.

#2 Stay home when sick

If you do catch the flu, make sure you stay home and rest. If you have influenza-like illness (fever with cough or sore throat) you should stay home and not go into the community except to seek medical care. Stay home for at least 24-hours after being free of fever (100° F [37.8°]) without having used fever-reducing medications like Tylenol or Advil.

For most people the flu will be a mild or moderate illness. Treat the symptoms by drinking plenty of fluids, getting enough rest and taking medicine if you have a fever. If your symptoms become more serious contact your health care provider right away.

#3 Wash hands often

Sing the 'Happy Birthday' song twice while washing your hands. Make sure you rub your hands thoroughly in soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If there is no soap and water available, an alcohol-based sanitizer may be used.

#4 Cover coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then throw the tissue in the trash immediately. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow. Never cough into your hands.

For more information, go to www.sccphd.org or www.cdc.gov/flu/