

# Stop the Spread of Flu and COVID-19 this Winter

Influenza (flu) and COVID-19 cases generally peak in the winter months as the temperature drops. It is important to keep up-to-date with your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations, even if you are healthy. This can help protect your friends, family and vulnerable people in your community.

Symptoms of the flu may last for at least a week and can include:

- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Cough
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Runny or stuffy nose
- ✓ Muscle aches
- ✓ Joint pains
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Nausea
- ✓ Vomiting and diarrhoea  
(more common in children than adults)

If you have any flu-like symptoms, you should take a test for COVID-19 straight away, even if you are up-to-date with your vaccinations.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you can experience the following symptoms:

- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Coughing
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Shortness of breath

**Some people recover easily while others get very sick.**



## While we are entering the latter half of winter, there are still simple steps we can take to stop the spread of flu and COVID-19:

### **Avoid close contact with people who are sick**

When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too. Consider doing a rapid antigen test (RAT) before visiting people at higher risk of severe illness.

### **Stay home when you are sick**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you're sick or wear a mask if you need to leave home.

### **Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing**

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk.

### **Consider wearing a mask**

Wearing a mask is an additional prevention strategy that you can choose to do to further protect yourself and others. When worn by a person with an infection, masks reduce the spread of the virus to others.

### **Clean your hands**

Frequent hand washing will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

### **Take steps towards cleaner air**

You can improve air quality by bringing in fresh outside air, purifying indoor air or gathering outdoors. Plan get togethers outdoors or in large, well-ventilated spaces with open doors and windows.

### **Practice good hygiene**

Cleaning frequently touched surfaces, such as countertops, handrails, and doorknobs regularly can help prevent the spread of some illnesses. Dispose of your tissues immediately. Avoid sharing cups, plates, cutlery and towels with other people, if you can.

### **Other healthy habits**

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

If you are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 or flu, speak with your GP to make a plan about what to do if you get sick, including what test to take and discussing if you are eligible for antiviral medicines.

If you become unwell, you can contact healthdirect for **free 24-hour support** on **1800 022 222** for health advice and support (including for the flu).

If your symptoms become severe, please **consult your GP** or **call Triple Zero (000)** straight away.