



Influenza

DISEASE FACT SHEET



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INFLUENZA?

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INFLUENZA INCLUDE FEVER, HEADACHE, CHILLS, MUSCLE ACHES AND PAINS, NASAL CONGESTION, COUGH, SORE THROAT, DECREASED ENERGY, CROUP, BRONCHIOLITIS, OR PNEUMONIA.

WHAT IS INFLUENZA?

INFLUENZA IS A RESPIRATORY ILLNESS CAUSED BY A VIRUS. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT STRAINS OF INFLUENZA, INCLUDING INFLUENZA A AND INFLUENZA B. STOMACH CRAMPS, VOMITING, AND DIARRHEA OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE “STOMACH FLU” IS NOT INFLUENZA. IT IS A GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS OFTEN CAUSED BY NOROVIRUS, A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FAMILY OF VIRUSES.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

INFLUENZA IS SPREAD BY RESPIRATORY (DROPLET) ROUTE. WHEN SOMEONE COUGHS, TALKS, OR SNEEZES, DROPLETS ARE EXPELLED THAT CAN LAND ON OBJECTS OR BE RUBBED INTO THE EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH. THE DROPLETS DO NOT STAY IN THE AIR. THEY TRAVEL LESS THAN THREE FEET THEN FALL ONTO THE GROUND.

HOW DO YOU KEEP IT FROM SPREADING?

GET THE YEARLY INFLUENZA VACCINE (SHOT). ALWAYS PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE – WASH HANDS WELL WITH SOAP AND WATER. EVERYONE SHOULD COVER THEIR NOSES AND MOUTHS WHEN SNEEZING OR COUGHING WITH A FACIAL TISSUE OR THEIR ARM/SHOULDER. DISPOSE OF FACIAL TISSUES AND WASH HANDS WELL. STAY AWAY FROM LARGE CROWDS AND/OR SICK PEOPLE. MEDICATIONS (ANTI-VIRALS) ARE MOST HELPFUL IF GIVEN IN THE FIRST 24-48 HOURS.

INFLUENZA IN GROUP SETTINGS

CHILDREN OVER THE AGE OF 6 MONTHS, TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS SHOULD RECEIVE THE ANNUAL IMMUNIZATION. USE GOOD HAND-HYGIENE TECHNIQUES ALWAYS. EVERYONE SHOULD COVER THEIR NOSES AND MOUTHS WHEN SNEEZING OR COUGHING AND PERFORM HAND HYGIENE AFTER HAVING CONTACT WITH MUCUS. REDUCE CROWDING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. INFLUENZA CAN BE SEVERE IN YOUNG CHILDREN AND OLDER ADULTS. DEATH CAN OCCUR IN PREVIOUSLY HEALTH CHILDREN. THE RISK OF SPREAD OF INFLUENZA IS VERY HIGH AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN. THEY CAN BRING THE INFECTION HOME TO THEIR FAMILY AS WELL AS SPREAD IT INTO THE COMMUNITY.

EXCLUSIONS:

EXCLUSION IS NECESSARY IF A CHILD IS UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A GROUP SETTING AND COMPROMISES THE HEALTH OF OTHER CHILDREN IN THE GROUP, IF THERE IS FEVER OR BEHAVIOR CHANGES, IF OTHER EXCLUSION CRITERIA IS MET. ONCE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OTHERS IS NOT COMPROMISED, THE CHILD MAY RETURN. IN THE EVENT OF A PANDEMIC INFLUENZA, THE EXCLUSION AND READMISSION CRITERIA MAY BE DIFFERENT.