

### MYTH

I'm healthy – I don't need to be immunized.

### FACT

Being healthy doesn't protect you from the influenza virus. In fact, you can spread the virus to others even if you don't have flu symptoms!

### MYTH

The flu shot protects against all colds and viruses.

### FACT

The flu shot does not protect you against the common cold or other mild viruses. Influenza is a respiratory virus that may cause significant illness including pneumonia and other serious complications. The flu shot protects against three different strains of influenza virus that are circulating during the year.

### MYTH

I already had a flu shot last year – I do not need one this year.

### FACT

The influenza virus is tricky to fight as it is constantly changing. An immunization taken the year before is likely ineffective against this year's strain. Also, immunity lasts approximately six months in a healthy adult. For these reasons, influenza immunization is required every year.

## CAREWEST EMPLOYEE HEALTH & SAFETY

Carewest maintains a strong commitment to employee health, safety and wellness. Employee Health and Safety (EH&S) provides oversight for:

- Employee health including immunizations
- Safety services such as audits, inspections and coordination of health and safety committees
- Management of ill or injured workers including coordination of modified duties and return-to-work assistance
- Injury prevention education including body mechanics training (BACK)
- Health promotion activities including information about the Employee and Family Assistance program and providing other personal health counselling and education

You can call EH&S with questions about health and safety at 403-943-8182.

## CAREWEST INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

The Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) service provides expertise on infection control issues including:

- Client immunization
- Outbreak management
- Prevention of communicable disease transmission
- Hand hygiene
- Disease surveillance in the client population
- IP&C audits

IP&C consultation is available at 403-943-8165.



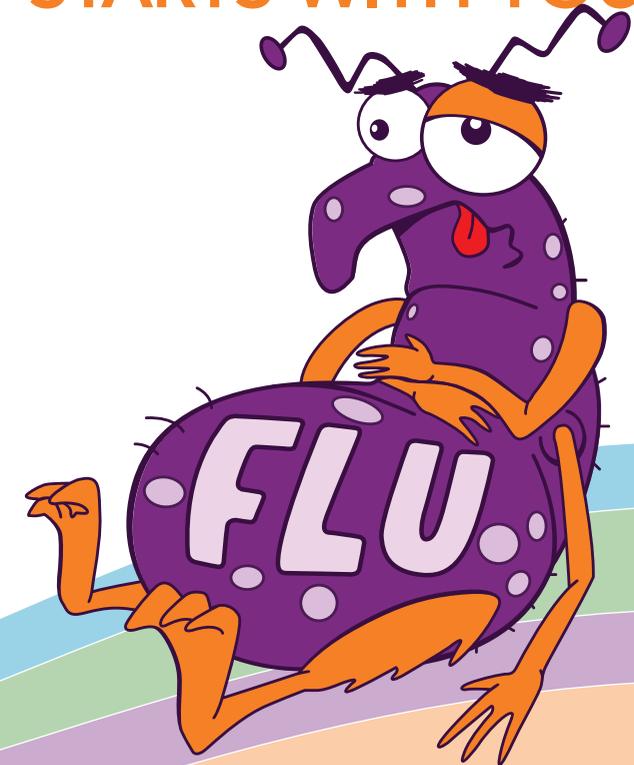
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## InFLUenza INFORMATION

# FIGHT THE FLU

## IT STARTS WITH YOU



### MYTH

I heard that there is mercury in the influenza vaccine – isn't that dangerous?

### FACT

Thimerosal acts as a preservative or stabilizer in multi-dose vials of influenza vaccine (Fluviral). The amount of Thimerosal is not significant enough to cause harm and is about equal to the amount of mercury found in a can of tuna.

### MYTH

The flu shot makes you sick.

### FACT

You cannot get influenza from getting a flu shot because the vaccine is inactivated or "dead". Some people may feel slightly ill and have a headache, body ache or chills but this is a normal response to an immunization.

### MYTH

The flu shot contains eggs and I'm allergic.

### FACT

There are traces of egg proteins in the influenza shot. New research says that even if you are allergic to eggs you can still be immunized. People who experience "anaphylaxis" or have a severe egg allergy may wish to speak to their doctor about alternatives.

## YOU NEED TO KNOW!

InFLUenza is a highly contagious viral infection that can be spread by:

- UNWASHED HANDS
- TOUCHING OBJECTS
- TALKING
- SNEEZING
- COUGHING

A flu shot helps protect you from:

- Getting inFLUenza
- Complications of inFLUenza such as pneumonia
- Spreading disease to your family, friends and caregivers

What you should know:

- The inFLUenza vaccine cannot give you inFLUenza because it does not contain live virus
- InFLUenza vaccine rarely causes side-effects like diarrhea, nausea or vomiting

## COMPARE SYMPTOMS

InFLUenza, a cold, and stomach upset are different illnesses.

DESCRIPTION & SYMPTOMS	INFLUENZA	COMMON COLD	STOMACH UPSET
Virus Involved	Influenza A or B	Many different kinds of viruses such as rhinovirus, coronavirus, adenovirus, etc.	Norovirus (Norwalk-like viruses) is the most common.
Fever	Usually high, beginning suddenly and lasting 3-4 days	Sometimes	Rarely
Headache	Usually, can be severe	Rarely	Sometimes
Chills, Aches, Pain	Usually, and often severe	Rarely	Common
Loss of Appetite	Sometimes	Sometimes	Frequently - usually nausea, vomiting and diarrhea occur as well
Cough	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
Sore Throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely
Sniffles or Sneezes	Sometimes	Usually	Rarely
Extreme Tiredness	Usually - tiredness may last 2-3 weeks or more	Rarely	Sometimes
Involves Whole Body	Usually	Never	Stomach and bowel only
Symptoms Appear Quickly	Yes	More gradual	Yes
Possible Complications (Health Problems)	Pneumonia, kidney failure, swelling of the brain and death	Sinus infection or ear infection	Dehydration (losing more fluid than you take in)
Vaccine	Yearly vaccine provides protection against two influenza A strains and one influenza B strain	No vaccine available	No vaccine available

Source: Alberta Health

# BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION

- Get your annual inFLUenza immunization!
- Wash your hands often and keep your hands away from your face to prevent spreading the virus.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle: follow a good diet, get enough sleep, exercise and drink lots of water.

