



CDC Gives Top 3 "To Do" List for Seniors during Flu Season

Enjoying your golden years can mean embracing exciting and new activities, enjoying grandchildren, and spending time with friends. To stay healthy and active, there are important actions you can take to keep health threats like the flu from knocking you off your feet. People 65 and older are most vulnerable to getting severe illness from the flu.

Fortunately, there are actions you can take to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu. First, take time to get a flu vaccine. "The flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu," says Dr. Nancy Cox, Director of the Influenza Division at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We have an all-time high supply of vaccine this season and because flu viruses can cause illness into the spring, getting the vaccine even in December or later can still protect against flu."

Second, make sure to take everyday steps that can help stop the spread of germs like covering your nose and mouth with a tissue and washing your hands with soap and water often. Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth since germs spread this way.

And remember to stay away from others if you are sick to keep from spreading your illness to others.

And third, if you do find yourself sick with flu symptoms, such as a high fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose and muscle aches, there are flu antiviral drugs that can help. These drugs should be started within 48 hours of getting sick, but must be prescribed by a doctor.

So don't let the flu take you out of commission this season. Take these easy steps to take care.

Side bar

Did you know?

Each year on average:

- 36,000 people die from flu-related complications.
- 90 percent of those deaths occur in people 65 years and older.
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; more than half of these are people 65 years and older.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu,
or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6358 (TTY).