

Fact Sheet



Flu

The Portsmouth City Health Department provides communicable disease monitoring through the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) for the citizens of Portsmouth. During the 2018-2019 flu season, there were 30 community members hospitalized due to complications from the flu. The health department is committed to providing preventative education and vaccines in an effort to maintain healthy members in our community.

What is the flu?

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.

How does flu spread?

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes.

What are the symptoms of flu?

Flu is different from a cold. As it usually comes on suddenly. People who are sick with flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches

- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

Who is most likely to be infected with flu?

Some individuals are at a high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

- Pregnant Women
- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- People 65 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu

How can flu be prevented?

The first and most important step in preventing flu is to get a flu vaccine each year. Flu vaccine has been shown to reduce flu related illnesses and the risk of serious flu complications that can result in hospitalization or even death. Frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes and staying away from others who are sick. These actions will help to slow the spread of germs that cause illnesses like the flu.

For more information regarding flu, contact the Portsmouth City Health Department Clinic at 740-353-8863.

For more information visit:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov