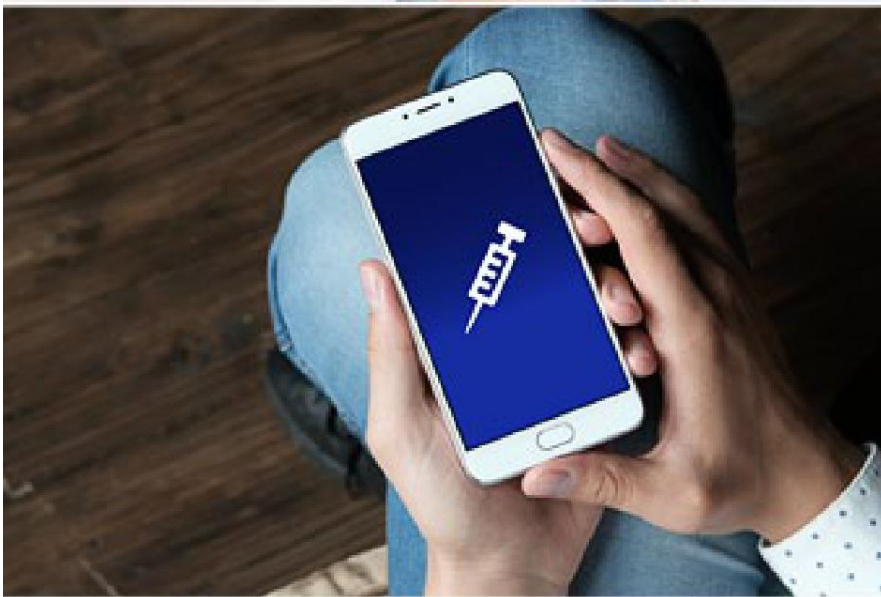




Preventing The Flu



Overview

The flu leads to missed days of work or school. For some people, it can be life-threatening. So when flu season comes around, it's time to protect yourself against the influenza virus. Here are some tips to help you avoid the flu.

Protect yourself

First, get a yearly flu vaccine. It's best to get it by the end of October, but it can still be effective even if you get it later. The flu vaccine will help protect you for the entire flu season. And by protecting yourself, you'll also help protect those around you.

Avoid the flu virus

Next, avoid the flu virus. It spreads easily through coughs, sneezes and close contact. So stay away from people who are sick. Keep your hands clean. Wash your hands with soap and water frequently. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available. And don't touch your face with unwashed hands.

Protect others

And finally, if you do get the flu, go see your doctor right away. There are prescription antiviral medications that fight the flu, but you must start taking them soon after getting sick. And keep your flu from spreading. Don't go to work or school when you're sick. Don't shake hands, kiss or hug. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your upper shirtsleeve. Always wash your hands after you cough or sneeze. And disinfect the surfaces you touch.

Conclusion

These tips aren't guaranteed to keep you completely free of the flu, but they can help you reduce your risk.