

# 2009 Influenza Prevention



## How is influenza spread?

- Flu is spread person-to-person mainly by coughs and sneezes.
- People may also get flu after touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their own mouths or noses.
- You cannot become infected by eating poultry, pork, or any other specific foods.

## How can I avoid getting the flu?

- **By far, the single best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated.**
- Practicing good health habits can help your immune system work best to fight off infection.
- Get plenty of sleep, physical activity, fluids, and nutritious foods.
- Everyday actions can help prevent the spread of germs that cause many respiratory infections.

## What everyday actions can help prevent flu?

- Wash your hands often, particularly after you cough or sneeze.
- If you can't wash your hands, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with people you know are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.

## How should I clean objects and surfaces?

- Flu viruses have been shown to survive on surfaces and objects for 2 to 8 hours.
- Flu virus is killed by heat (167-212°F) and by cleaners containing chlorine, peroxide, detergents, iodine, and alcohol.
- Continue your usual cleaning, dishwashing, and laundering according to product labels.
- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes used by the sick do not need to be cleaned separately. But do not share these items without washing thoroughly first.

## What else can I do to prevent infection?

- If there is widespread flu in your area, public health officials may recommend certain actions to prevent spread.
- Listen for and follow public health advice about avoiding crowded settings and other social distancing recommendations.
- Be prepared for possible school dismissal and other closings by arranging for child care and supplies you may need at home.

More information may be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.dhd10.org](http://www.dhd10.org).

*This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used as a substitute for talking with a health care provider. If you have any questions, please talk with your health care provider.*

## District Health Department #10

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