



*For a lifetime of caring*

## MID COAST HEALTH SERVICES

Mid Coast Hospital • Mid Coast Medical Group • Mid Coast Senior Health Center • CHANS Home Health Care

# *When you are asked to* **STAY HOME with the FLU** A CHECKLIST & GUIDE

**A PERSON WITH INFLUENZA** may be able to spread illness for seven (7) days after the first day they had symptoms. This checklist will help limit the spread of illness in your home while you or a sick family member is house bound.

### **1. *Limit physical contact between the sick and well***

- Ill household members need to be physically separate from well persons living in the home. Pick one room in which ill persons can stay.  
If more than one person is sick, all ill persons can share the same room.  
The ideal sick room...
  - Has windows that open to increase air circulation.
  - Gets natural light.
  - Has a door that closes to the rest of the house.
  - Has a bathroom attached or nearby so the ill are not sharing bathroom space with those who are well.
- One person in the home should be the caregiver; all others should have minimal contact with the ill. Only the caregiver should bring meals, beverages, and medications to the ill person.
- Adult ill persons should avoid contact with others until 24 hours after their fever subsides without medication. Children should remain room-bound from 10 days after onset until well. When travel outside the home is necessary (for example, for medical care), the ill person should cover the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and wear a surgical mask, if available.
- If contact between the ill and well cannot be avoided (for example, during a trip in a car), place a surgical mask on the ill person (or on the well person if the ill cannot tolerate a mask), and open the windows to increase air circulation.

### **2. *Contain respiratory secretions of the ill***

All persons showing signs of a chest infection—whatever the cause—should...

- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
- Use tissues to contain secretions.
- Dispose of tissues in a waste receptacle after use.
- Wash hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol hand rub after contact with secretions or contaminated objects or surfaces.

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### 3. *Protect the well*

Anyone who cannot avoid contact with the ill person should protect themselves with a surgical mask and gloves and hand washing with soap and water or an alcohol hand rub.

- Wear a surgical mask within 3–6 feet of an ill person. Wash hands or use alcohol hand rub after touching or discarding a mask.
- Wear gloves if there is likely to be contact with secretions. Discard gloves immediately after use.
- If hands are visibly soiled, wash with warm water and soap.
- If hands are not visibly soiled, use an alcohol hand rub.
- Clean hands every time there is contact with a person who may be ill, after removing mask or gloves, or after touching objects or surfaces that may be contaminated.

### 4. *Keep the home environment clean*

- Tissues used by an ill person should be placed in a bag and disposed of with other household waste.
- Laundry may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm or cold water and detergent. It is not necessary to separate laundry used by an ill person from other household laundry. Care should be taken when handling soiled laundry to avoid getting flu germs on your hands. Wash hands after handling soiled laundry.
- Dirty dishes and eating utensils used by an ill person should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
- Surfaces in the home can be cleaned using routine cleaning products, like a multi-purpose cleaner such as an ammonia-based product, or a diluted bleach solution (1:10 solution = 1/4 cup bleach to 2 1/2 cups water). NOTE: **Never mix cleaning solutions.**

### 5. *Prevent illness among household members*

- Limit visitors. Those not essential for patient care or support should NOT have close contact while persons are actively ill with the flu or—in the absence of a known cause—any flu-like illness with a temperature of more than 100.4°F (37.8°C) with cough and/or sore throat.
- Household members should monitor themselves for illness (fever, cough, and achiness) and contact a telephone hotline or healthcare provider if symptoms occur. Over-the-counter medications, such as Tylenol or ibuprofen, may relieve some symptoms. For young children, Pedialyte will provide electrolytes and help prevent dehydration. Having popsicles on hand may also be useful for children who are ill.

*For more information, visit [www.maine-flu.gov/dhhs/boh/swine-flu-2009.shtml](http://www.maine-flu.gov/dhhs/boh/swine-flu-2009.shtml)*



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*Based on information from the*

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