What you need to know this FLU SEASON
A CHECKLIST & GUIDE

**Seasonal Flu**... follows predictable patterns and occurs annually, usually in winter. Some immunity is built up from previous exposures. All types of flu have similar symptoms. Although the flu and common cold have similar symptoms, the flu tends to be more severe. A vaccine developed based on known strains is usually available. Outbreaks are generally manageable. Your health care provider can give you a test to determine whether or not you have the flu.

1. **What are the symptoms of the flu?**
   Flu symptoms include:
   - A 100°F or higher fever or feeling feverish (*not everyone with the flu has a fever*)
   - A cough and/or sore throat
   - A runny or stuffy nose
   - Headaches and/or body aches
   - Chills
   - Fatigue
   - Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea (*most common in children*)

2. **Do I have the flu or a cold?**
   The flu and the common cold have similar symptoms. It can be difficult to tell the difference between them. Your health care provider can give you a test within the first few days of your illness to determine whether or not you have the flu.
   In general...
   - The flu is worse than the common cold.
   - Symptoms such as fever, body aches, tiredness, and cough are more common and intense with the flu.
   - People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose.

3. **What action should I take for seasonal flu**
   - If you come down with flu-like symptoms—fever, cough, runny nose, and muscle pain—drink plenty of water to stay hydrated, get bed rest, and call your doctor.

Continues on back
4. **When should I seek emergency medical attention?**
Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any of the following:
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Purple or blue discoloration of the lips
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Seizures
- Flu-like symptoms that improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

5. **How do I limit the spread of germs and prevent infection?**
- Wash your hands frequently and vigorously with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based (60-95%) hand cleaner.
- Get a flu shot each year.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or cover coughs and sneezes with tissues. Always dispose of used tissues in a waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
- Teach your children these habits and serve as a good role model.
- Stay away from others as much as possible if you are sick. Keep your children home from school and stay home from work if sick. Think about alternative day care. If you are ill, don’t visit friends and relations in the hospital.
- Ask your doctor about pneumonia vaccine and make sure all of your shots are current.

*For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season)*