

## Influenza (Flu)

- Influenza (Flu) is an infection of the respiratory system caused by the influenza virus
- In Canada, it is estimated that influenza is the cause for 12,200 hospitalizations and 3,500 deaths each year.
- On average, influenza season runs from November to March of each year in Canada.



## Influenza Symptoms

COVID-19 and influenza can have similar symptoms and will vary from person to person. Some people may get mildly ill while others may get very sick.

Influenza (flu) symptoms appear one to four days after exposure to the virus and usually includes the sudden onset of:

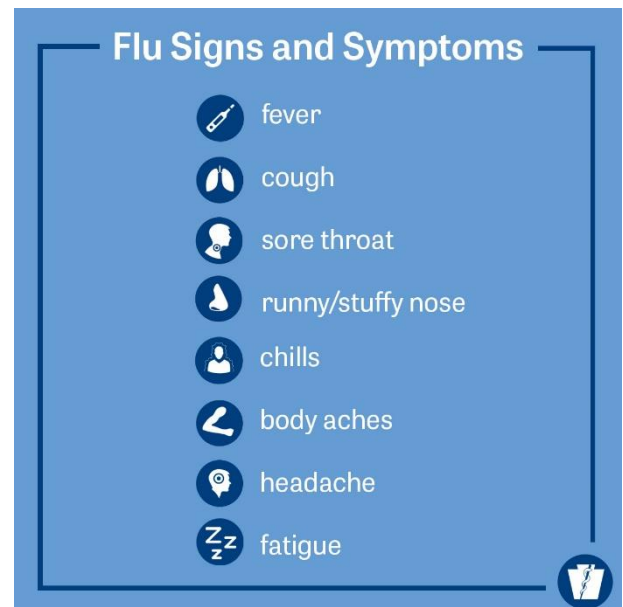
- Fever
- Cough
- muscle aches and pain

Other common symptoms may include:

- headache
- chills
- fatigue (tiredness)
- loss of appetite
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose

Some people (especially children) may also have:

- diarrhea
- nausea and vomiting



People infected with the flu virus can spread it to others beginning one day before the first symptoms appear until approximately five days after the first symptoms have appeared.

## Similarities Between the Symptoms of the Flu and COVID-19

Influenza and COVID-19 are different viruses, however both are very contagious and have similar symptoms. You can only confirm if you have the flu or COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing Kit. Free Rapid Antigen Testing Kits (subject to availability) are provided free to students, faculty, staff, and the general public at **Campus Security** during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:30 pm) – **Research and Innovation Centre 120**.

If you do get sick, stay home and away from work or class to help prevent the spread of the flu or potentially COVID-19. Avoid close contact with other people until you feel well enough to get back to your usual day-to-day activities. This is especially important for people who have higher chances of developing complications from the flu. Most people recover from the flu in seven to ten days.



### Influenza Vaccine (Flu shot)

This year it is more important than ever for everyone six months and older to get the flu shot. This will help prevent the flu and flu-related complications.

#### Getting your flu shot can save lives by:

- protecting you, if you're exposed to the virus;
- preventing you from becoming very ill;
- protecting people close to you because you will be less likely to spread the virus to those who are at a higher risk of serious flu complications if they get the flu;
- reducing the additional burden on the health care system due to COVID-19 and other illnesses. You are also reducing your chances of being infected with COVID-19 and the flu at the same time, which could lead to more serious complications.

### THE FLU SHOT WILL NOT PROTECT YOU AGAINST COVID-19

You need to get a flu shot every year, as a new flu vaccine is created each year to protect you during flu season. It is important that you get a new flu shot every year because the type of flu viruses circulating in the population changes from year to year. The effectiveness of the flu shot can wear off so you need a new one every year to stay protected.

Getting your flu shot is still the **most safe and effective** way to protect yourself against the flu and flu-related complications.

» You **cannot** get the flu from the flu shot    » Most people have **no side effects** from the flu shot  
» Severe reactions are **very rare**

Please watch your email for the announcement of three on-campus Influenza and COVID-19 booster clinics hosted by Health and Safety, in partnership with Alliance Pharmacy on **Tuesday, October 17, Thursday, October 19** and **Wednesday, October 25**.