

### Round-up

Bundle up! Fall is here! As the seasons change, there is always a chance someone may get sick. It's human nature. For this season, precautions and preventions for the flu are in order. No matter where you go or what you do, someone always catches the flu. If you're looking for ways to help prevent yourself from catching it, you're in the right place. Instead of you searching around for information, I have it all right here just for you.

Everyone knows the first way to avoid the flu. You should go get the flu shot. I know many people always think that they don't need and it doesn't do anything. That's not true. The FDA states, "The vaccine is an important step for reducing flu illnesses and preventing flu-related hospitalizations and deaths." True, it is the flu, but there are chances that it can get severe. The vaccine can help reduce that chance. Even the Cosmopolitan spoke to the CDC and was told, "You might still get other strains of the flu despite vaccination, although it's less likely to be severe, and you're less likely to develop pneumonia, be put on a ventilator, visit the intensive-care unit, or die from the flu after you've been vaccinated." It's your choice. You can either get the vaccine and less your chances of severity or you can decide to go without the vaccine and raise your chances of severity.

The next thing you can do is so simple. Many people may not think about it. You should wash your hands. I know right. My mind is blown, too. I mean everyone washes their hands, right? You can't really know for sure. At least, do it for yourself. The FDA tells us, "Both colds and flu can be passed through contaminated surfaces, including the hands." There's a possibility that you may have a trace of flu on your hands right now. Don't have a sink or soap? Just follow what the CDC suggests, "If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub." It's good to keep a small container of hand sanitizer just in case.

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Another simple thing you can do is cover your mouth and nose. The CDC states, “Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.” This can decrease the chance of transferring the flu to someone else, even if you have the flu or not. The Cosmopolitan talked to Dr. Adalja and the doctor stated, “The flu virus is a parasite that hangs around in respiratory secretions that travel through the air in small droplets; when projected by a cough or sneeze, they can fly about three feet before gravity takes over.” So, let’s keep those mouths and noses covered.

“Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too,” the CDC states. It makes sense to avoid getting the flu that you would avoid people with the flu. The CDC went forward to state, “If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.” For those who already have the flu, it makes sense to keep your distance from people to prevent them from getting the flu. The Cosmopolitan recommends to “stay at least three feet away from anyone who’s coughing or sneezing.” Keep your distance and you will decrease your chances of getting sick.

Honestly, I didn’t think of doing this to prevent the flu. Both the CDC and the Cosmopolitan inform to not touch your mouth, eyes and nose. We touch our mouths, eyes and noses so many times a day. I wouldn’t have thought about transferring germs that was. Cosmopolitan states, “Simply touching a contaminated surface won’t give you the flu, since the virus doesn’t infect the skin — it has to make it to a mucosal membrane in your mouth or nose to cause an infection.” The CDC tells us, “Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.”

“For avoiding the flu, I wash my hands with soap and water and drink orange juice,” Maurice Rankin, a computer technician said.

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“You should definitely get a flu shot, wash your hands and try to avoid people who sneeze and coughs around you,” Nacoshia Mark, a stay at home mom, said, “Oh, and disinfect. That’s a good thing to do. Especially with my family, we get sick easily and have to be precautions.”

“We recommend that you wash your hands multiple times a day, use Lysol, avoid people who are sick and take a multivitamin. We also recommend that you get the flu vaccine this season,” M. Barber, a certified medical assistant at the Women’s Pavilion in Hattiesburg, said.

Take precautions and follow these tips to help avoid the flu this season.