

Strategic Benefit Solutions Incorporated



**A
Healthy
Piece...**

...wellness newsletter providing you with a monthly educational article to help you live well and be healthy. *One piece at a time.*

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“Every year influenza, or “flu,” affects employers and businesses. Flu costs the U.S. approximately \$10.4 billion in direct costs for hospitalizations and outpatient visits for adults.”

Influenza (Flu): Prevention Is Best Medicine

While seasonal influenza viruses can be detected year-round in the United States, flu viruses are most common during the fall and winter. The exact timing and duration of flu seasons can vary, but influenza activity often begins to increase in October. Most of the time flu activity peaks between December and March, although activity can last as late as May.

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes or possibly their nose.

You may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five to seven days after becoming sick. Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.

Signs and Symptoms of the Flu

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in kids)

Preventing the Flu

The first and most important step in preventing flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. CDC also recommends everyday preventive actions (like staying away from people who are sick, covering coughs and sneezes and frequent handwashing) to help slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory (nose, throat, and lungs) illnesses, like flu.

Flu Vaccination

- Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as the current season's vaccines are available.
- Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.

(Source: www.cdc.gov)

