

The Flu

Know the Facts and be Prepared

The flu season is in full swing and slowly moving its way into our community. As always, being prepared is important in keeping yourself healthy. The following information compiled by Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Program Specialist, Josefa B. Pena, MPH, will help you be ready in the event the flu hits your household.

Build a Kit

- Keep at least a 2-week supply of flu-fighting essentials (water, food, medication, tissue, etc.) to help care for yourself and your family.

Enhance your Immunity

- If you haven't already got a flu shot, do it today! Call ahead to your local doctor's office or pharmacy to ensure they have them available.
- Have healthy lifestyle habits.
 - Eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
 - Get plenty of rest. Sleep at least 7 to 8 hours a night.
 - Exercise regularly, at least 30 minutes of activity most days of the week.

Wash Your Hands

The single most effective way to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses, like the flu.

- Wash hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, rubbing them together briskly while using soap and warm water.
- Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol when water is not available. Hand sanitizers do not remove surface dirt or other debris; therefore, wash hands as soon as running water is available.

Clean and Disinfect

- First, clean your household with detergent and water to remove surface dirt and other debris.
- Then, sanitize common areas with a disinfectant to kill germs such as a diluted bleach solution or disinfectant.

Cover Your Cough or Sneeze

- Cough or sneeze into the sleeve of your upper arm or the crook of your elbow.

- Use disposable tissues when available.
- Wash your hands after sneezing into a tissue or blowing your nose.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Keep Your Distance

- Remain at home when sick to prevent the spread of the flu.
- Do not return to school or work until your fever is below 100 °F for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medicine.
- Stay 3 to 6 feet away from others who are sick.
- Avoid kissing and hugging others while ill.

For more information about the flu, visit the Texas Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) website at texashelp.tamu.edu or call the Texas A & M AgriLife Extension office at 903-473-4580.