



Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 47 – November 16-20, 2020

Influenza Season

Introduction

It's that time of year again, sniffle, sneezing, coughing and wheezing. Sometimes those sniffles can take a turn for the worst and become the dreaded flu virus. This week we will get a better understanding of what the flu virus is, different types of flu viruses, discuss prevention steps, signs and symptoms and what to do if you get sick.

Monday – Understanding the Influenza Virus

Influenza is a viral infection that attacks the lungs, nose and throat. There are 4 types of influenza viruses: type A, B, C and D. Type A and B are the viruses that routinely spread in people and are responsible for the seasonal flu epidemic each year. Influenza A viruses are the only influenza viruses known to cause flu pandemics (global epidemics of flu disease). A pandemic occurs when a new or very different virus emerges that infect people and travels very efficiently between people.

Tuesday – Influenza Prevention

Now that we understand what the influenza virus is, let's discuss some helpful tips to prevent contracting the illness.

- Get vaccinated
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available, use alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Wednesday – Influenza Signs and Symptoms

Below are a list of signs and symptoms that often accompany the influenza virus. Keep an eye out for these in yourself and others to prevent contracting or spreading the virus.

- Fever and/or chills
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or Stuffy Nose
- Muscle or Body Aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Some people may experience vomiting or diarrhea, although it's more common in children than adults

Thursday – What To Do If You Get Sick

If in the unfortunate event that you do get sick, here are some helpful tips to avoid spreading the illness to friends, family and co-workers.

- Stay at home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing
- Clean your hands frequently
- Avoid others when possible



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Friday – Practice Other Good Health Habits

This week we've discussed helpful precautions regarding the flu virus but there are many good healthy habits to have in order to avoid sickness this season.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched items at home, work or school
- Get plenty of sleep
- Be physically active
- Manage stress
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Eat nutritious foods

Discussion: What are some ways you and your loved ones stay healthy during the cold and flu season?