



# What to Do If You Get *The Flu*

If you did not receive your flu vaccine this year, you may have an unwelcome visitor in your home this winter. The flu bug.

Physicians at Cape Fear Valley Health System's three ExpressCares see a lot of patients with the flu during the winter months. Flu symptoms to watch out for include: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Most flu sufferers have mild symptoms and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs. Some people, however, are more likely to get flu complications and should talk to their healthcare provider to see if they need to be examined. These include people ages 65 and older, pregnant women, people who have cancer, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disorders or any condition that weakens the immune system, as well as children younger than five.

If your child gets the flu, make sure he or she sneezes with a tissue and covers his or her cough. As you care for your child, make sure to wash your hands often to keep from spreading the virus to yourself or others in the household.

If your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms, you should contact your physician or bring him or her to the Emergency Department:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Fever with a rash
- Being so irritable he or she does not want to be held
- Not waking up or interacting
- If flu-like symptoms improve only to return with fever and worse cough

Adults should call their doctor or visit the Emergency Department if they are experiencing any of the following:


- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

If you are home sick with the flu, make sure to get plenty of rest, drink plenty of liquids and avoid using alcohol and tobacco. Take medication to relieve the symptoms of flu, but never give aspirin to children or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms – and particularly fever – without first speaking to your doctor. If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends staying home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol® or Ibuprofen.

The emergency room should be used for people who are very sick. Instead, consider visiting Cape Fear Valley ExpressCare. We have three convenient locations:

Cape Fear Valley ExpressCare  
Health Pavilion North ExpressCare  
Open seven days a week, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Highsmith-Rainey ExpressCare  
Open seven days a week, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.  
(Effective Jan. 3).

 Listen for Take Charge of Your Health messages on radio stations WIDU 1600 AM, Foxy 99.1 FM, Jamz 107.7 FM, Soul 104.5 FM and Magic 106.9 FM.



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