

[subject]

Flu Outbreak Alert!

[headline]

Flu Outbreak Alert!

[copy]

The flu season is here. As an important part of the [organization's name] annual flu vaccination program, we are constantly monitoring outbreaks in our communities.

For the week of [day & date] to [day & date], the flu activity in [location(s)] is [sporadic, local, regional, widespread].

[subhead]

Do you have the flu or just a cold?

[copy]

Influenza and a cold share many symptoms. However, when some people get infected by the flu, serious complications can occur: bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions. Notify your manager or human resources if you have any of the following flu symptoms:

- Fever
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Extreme tiredness
- Stomach symptoms: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea (commonly in children)
- Dry cough
- Sore throat

[subhead]

Are You at Risk for Serious Complications?

[copy]

Some people are considered at high risk for serious complications of the flu. It is vital that these people get an annual vaccination each year. (Remember, even if you are not considered high risk, you can easily transmit the virus to someone who is.)

___ Children aged 6 to 59 months

___ Women who will be pregnant during flu season

___ People over 50 years of age

___ People with chronic medical conditions (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease)

___ Health care workers and people who care for or have contact with people at high risk

[subhead]

If you or someone you love is at high risk—Get vaccinated!

[copy]

Vaccination might help prevent hospitalization and death among persons at high risk and might also reduce influenza-related respiratory illnesses and physician visits among all age groups.

[subhead]

If you do get sick with the flu

[copy]

See your doctor and ask for an antiviral prescription. Antiviral medications if taken right after you are exposed to someone who is sick with the flu, lessen your chance of becoming sick.

[subhead]

Be sure to take the following steps to protect yourself, your family, and your coworkers against the flu:

- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze—throw the tissue away after you use it
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use a hand sanitizer
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.** When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too
- **If you get the flu, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings.** By staying home, you will help prevent others from catching your illness
- **Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs are most often spread from your hands

[subhead]

If you do have the flu...

[copy]

Remember, the flu is contagious. To prevent the flu virus from infecting family, friends, and coworkers, please follow these instructions:

- Call in sick. Tell your manager, medical director, or human resources that you have the flu. You will help prevent others from catching your illness
- If you are a member of a group at high risk for complications of the flu, you should consult your health care provider
- Your doctor may recommend use of an antiviral medication to help treat the flu. It is a prescription medication, and a doctor should be consulted before the drug is used. Antiviral treatment must be started within 2 days of illness. Therefore, if you get flu-like symptoms, seek medical care early
- Recommend to family and coworkers that they get an antiviral medication to prevent flu infection
- Get plenty of rest, drink a lot of liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco. Also, consider taking medications to relieve the fever and muscle aches associated with the flu; you may want to consult your doctor about what medications are right for you. Never give aspirin to infants, children, or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms, particularly a fever; ask your child's doctor for guidance if you think your child has the flu

[subhead]

Be aware. Be safe.

[copy]

To monitor flu outbreaks across the US or around the world, click on the Flu Activity Surveillance Maps at www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm.