



Seasonal Challenges

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Winter is Coming: Prepare your household for COVID-19 and the flu

Respiratory illnesses will become more common as winter approaches and as influenza (flu) and other winter viral diseases join COVID-19. Most of these viruses are spread in similar ways. Steps to prevent COVID-19 also help prevent the spread of these other viruses.

How to Prepare for Winter Respiratory Illness

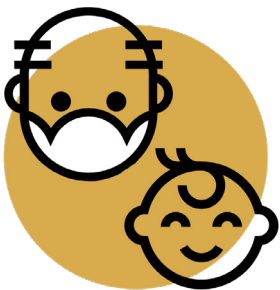


1. Get the flu vaccine. Everyone 6 months and older should receive the influenza vaccine.

2. Continue masking, social distancing and using good hygiene. These practices prevent spread of COVID-19, as well as influenza and other winter respiratory viruses. Most winter respiratory viruses are spread mainly through droplets (like those in coughs and sneezes) and from close contact with other persons.



3. Know who is at high risk for complications related to winter respiratory viruses: very young children (<2 years), older adults (65+ years) and people with chronic heart and lung conditions, obesity, cancer, and other diseases that suppress immunity.



4. Have plans for each household member when someone in the household becomes ill.

- Is there a separate room — and separate bathroom if possible — for sick household members?
- Where will high risk household members sleep or go if someone else in the household becomes sick?
- Which friends or family could drop off food and medicine if needed?





When you or someone in your household becomes sick...

1. Each sick person should stay away from work, school, or any public place. **DO NOT WAIT FOR A TEST RESULT TO DO THIS.**
2. Every household member should wear a mask, even inside; wash hands frequently; avoid sharing personal items; clean all surfaces that are touched frequently.
3. Monitor symptoms daily; alert a health care provider if breathing difficulties develop or fever persists.
4. For any medical emergency, call 911 and notify the dispatcher of illness in household.
5. Consult a health care provider about who and when to test for COVID-19 and flu, and about quarantine of other household members



What You Need to Know About Getting the Flu Vaccine

The Tennessee Department of Health has started advising health care providers on how to administer influenza and other vaccines in a safe and efficient way, including curbside vaccination (<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/GuidanceForCurbsideImmunizations.pdf>).

Tennessee health care providers, including VUMC, are making plans to make influenza vaccines widely available for patients and employees.

As in previous years, Vanderbilt University Medical Center employees will participate in a mass vaccination campaign, FLUla-2-Uza (<https://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/myvumc/index.html?article=24987>).

Notes: Strategies for combating the spread of COVID-19 and their likely effectiveness, a review of models for forecasting the spread and severity of COVID-19, and other topics will be the subject of additional working papers. The views expressed are those of the advisory group and do not necessarily reflect the views of Vanderbilt University School of Medicine or Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Please see vumc.org/health-policy/covid-19-advisory-memos for those papers.