

INFLUENZA AND SENIORS AGED 75 AND OVER

Seasonal flu is a contagious disease caused by the influenza virus. Seniors aged 75 and over run a greater risk of acute disease and serious complications (hospitalization and death) than the younger adult

SENIORS ARE MORE VULNERABLE

Advanced age makes people more vulnerable to serious flu complications. Approximately 90% of deaths and 50% of hospitalizations caused by seasonal flu occur among those aged 75 and over. This is because, as we age, the efficiency of our immune system decreases.

FLU SYMPTOMS

The flu can cause mild to serious symptoms and sometimes even lead to death. Infected persons experience at least one of the following symptoms:

- Fever, not always present
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle and joint pain
- Headache
- Extreme fatigue

Most people infected by the influenza virus will get better in just a few days, but the elderly may experience a rapid deterioration in their general health.

COMPLICATIONS OF THE FLU

Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinusitis and otitis are among the most frequent complications of the flu but some people will develop even more serious complications that can sometimes be fatal.

TREATING THE FLU

Fever and pain medication can ease flu symptoms. Antiviral medication against the influenza virus can help reduce the duration of symptoms and the risk of complications. It must be taken within 48 hours following onset of the first symptoms.

PREVENTING THE FLU

The best way to prevent the flu is to receive the vaccine every year. Good hygiene habits such as washing your hands regularly and covering your mouth when coughing can help limit propagation of the flu and other respiratory viruses. The elderly should avoid visiting people who have the flu.

VACCINATION, YOUR BEST PROTECTION AGAINST THE INFLUENZA VIRUS

People aged 75 and over should receive the influenza vaccine.

Data strongly supports the preventive effect of vaccination among seniors and their close ones. The vaccine reduces the risk of catching the flu and, if the infection does occur, it reduces the risk of complications.

Vaccination against serious pneumococcal infections (for example: blood infections, pneumonia, meningitis) is also recommended to ensure you are well protected. Ask your physician or the CLSC if this type of vaccine is appropriate for you.

I SPREAD HEALTH, NOT INFLUENZA.
I GET THE FLU SHOT.