

The flu

The flu is caused by a virus that is responsible for epidemics that occur especially in winter. It causes high fever, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, general feeling of malaise, stuffy nose and dry cough. Other viruses can cause the same symptoms. It lasts about one week. The cough and fatigue may persist for another two weeks.

What should I do if I have the flu?

When you are running a fever or have a general feeling of malaise, it is advisable to stay in bed. Drink at least 2 liters (2 quarts) of fluid a day (water, fruit juices, herbal infusions, soup, broth). If you are not allergic to it, take paracetamol every 6 hours. A sponge bath with lukewarm water helps lower fever. Antibiotics won't do any good.

When should I go to the doctor?

If the fever lasts more than 4 days or you have feelings of suffocation, you must go to the doctor. You can phone the **Sanitat Respon** health line for assessment at **112** or you can call your primary health care center (CAP).

What can be done to prevent the spread of flu?

The flu is a contagious disease. The sick person and everyone around him should wash their hands with soap and water. Use disposable tissues to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, and throw these tissues away into a closed bag. The sick person's room should be ventilated several times a day by leaving the window open.

Are there any vaccines for the flu?

The viruses change constantly so every year new vaccines are made that are updated according to the strains of flu expected that winter. People who are at a high risk of having complications from flu, such as persons over the age of 60 or those who have chronic bronchitis, heart or kidney disease, diabetes and those whose defenses are down should have flu shots. So should pregnant women and children with chronic health problems.

