



How to Care for Someone with Influenza (Flu)

The following information is a general guide and is not intended to take the place of medical advice from a licensed healthcare provider.

Monitoring and Comforting

- Use the care log on the other side of this paper for each ill person in the household.
- Bring your care log with you when you seek medical advice with your health care provider.
- An ill person and his/her caregivers should avoid drinking alcohol and using tobacco.
- Do not allow smoking in the house, as this may harm others who are ill.

Medications

In Children:

Never give aspirin to children or teenagers because it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.

Liquids and Nutrition

Recommended minimum daily liquid intake, if not eating solid food:

Young children (0 – 5 yrs old)	Older Children & Adults (5 yrs & up)
Need 1 ½ ounces of liquid per pound of body weight per day.	Need 1 ½ to 2 ½ quarts per day.
Example: (20 pound child) 20 x 1.5 = 30 ounces of liquid per day.	This equals: 3 – 5 8 oz. cups, or 2 – 3 12 oz. cans or bottles.

When vomiting IS Present:

- Do not give any liquid or food for at least 1 hour after vomiting stops. Let the stomach rest for an hour after each vomiting episode.
- Offer clear liquids that contain sugars and salts (see left column for list) in very small amounts.
- Start with 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon of clear liquid every 10 minutes.
- If vomiting does not return, gradually increase the amount of liquid offered until the recommended minimum daily liquid intake is restored.
- After 6 – 8 hours of a liquid diet without vomiting, add solid food that is easy to digest such as saltine crackers, dry toast, soup, mashed potatoes, or rice.
- Gradually, return to a regular diet.

These liquids that Contain Sugars and Salts are helpful when vomiting is present:

- Broth or soups
- Sports drinks (diluted half-and-half with water)
- Pedialyte® or Lytren® (undiluted)
- Ginger ale
- Cola, and other sodas may be used
- Avoid diet drinks and drinks with high amounts of caffeine.

When NO Vomiting Present:

- Vomiting is not a symptom of flu, but may be associated with other viral infections.
- If the ill person **is not** vomiting, offer small amounts of liquids frequently to prevent dehydration, even if the person is not thirsty.
- If the ill person is not eating solid foods, include liquids that contain sugars and salts.
- Regular urination is a good sign of hydration.

Signs of Dehydration (Not Drinking Enough):

Dehydration is dangerous. All people who are getting enough liquids should urinate at least every 8 - 12 hours. Seek medical attention immediately if these symptoms of dehydration continue to worsen:

- Decreased output of urine
- Urine becomes dark yellow
- Weakness or unresponsiveness
- Decreased saliva or dry mouth and tongue
- Sunken eyes
- Skin tenting on the belly or chest

If the ill person is dehydrated, give sips or spoonfuls of liquids frequently over a 4-hour period.

The ill person is recovering from dehydration if urination increases, urine becomes lighter in color, and if overall condition improves.



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Dehydrated persons who do not recover quickly should get immediate medical attention!

Your Child's Personal Care Log for Tracking the Flu

(Copy, fill out, and bring log sheets to health care provider visits.)

Child's Name _____

Primary Doctor's Name _____

Date	Time	Observations						Temperature	Medications	Fluids In (amount)	Urinate Output	
		Lethargic	Vomiting	Dry-mouth	Skin-Tenting	Skin Color	Other				Amount	Color
Ex: 10/1	5:30am	√	√		√	pale	Body aches	101 F	1 tsp liquid Tylenol	8 ounces of water	Not much	Yellow

More Monitoring and Comforting

Use the log above to record the date, time, and what you observe at least twice each day or more often if symptoms change rapidly:

- Check the temperature using a digital thermometer.
- Check the skin for color (pink, pale, or bluish) and rash.
- Record the approximate quantity of liquids consumed each day and night.
- Record how many times the ill person urinates each day and the color of the urine.
- Record all medications, dosages, and times given.

Keep tissues, and a trash bag for their disposal, near the ill person.

Fever is a sign that the body is fighting the infection. It will go away as the person gets better.

Sponging the ill person with lukewarm (wrist-temperature) water may lower their temperature, but only during that time. Do not sponge the ill person with alcohol.

Watch for Complications of Influenza

Medical complications may occur in **anyone** who has the flu. If the ill person develops any of the following symptoms, call your healthcare provider immediately.

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids, not urinating, no tears when crying
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting



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- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough