

Discharge Instructions

INFLUENZA

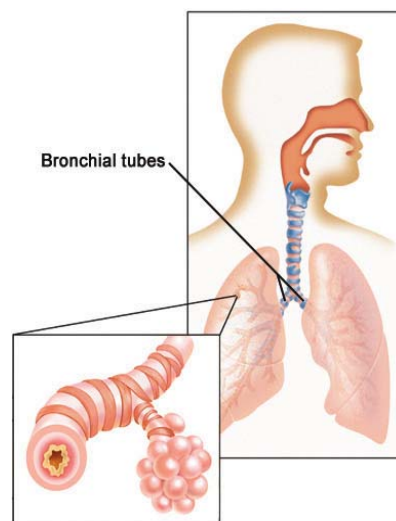
[Child]

Influenza, also called "the flu", is a viral illness that affects the air passages of the lungs. It differs from the common cold. It is highly contagious. It may be spread through the air by coughing and sneezing or by direct contact (touching the sick person and then touching your own eyes, nose or mouth). The illness starts one to three days after exposure and lasts for one to two weeks.

Symptoms include extreme tiredness, fevers, muscle aching, headache, and a dry hacking cough. Antibiotics are usually not needed unless a complication appears (such as ear infection or pneumonia).

HOME CARE:

- 1) **FLUIDS:** Fever increases water loss from the body. For infants under 1 year old, continue regular feedings (formula or breast). Between feedings give Oral Rehydration Solution (Pedialyte, Rehydralyte available from grocery and drug stores without a prescription). For children over 1 year old, give plenty of fluids like water, juice, Jell-O water, 7-Up, ginger-ale, lemonade, Kool-Aid or popsicles.
- 2) **FEEDING:** If your child doesn't want to eat solid foods, it's okay for a few days, as long as s/he drinks lots of fluid.
- 3) **ACTIVITY:** Keep children with fever at home resting or playing quietly. Encourage frequent naps. Your child may return to day care or school when the fever is gone and s/he is eating well and feeling better.
- 4) **SLEEP:** Periods of sleeplessness and irritability are common. A congested child will sleep best with the head and upper body propped up on pillows or with the head of the bed frame raised on a 6 inch block. An infant may sleep in a car seat placed on the bed.
- 5) **COUGH:** Coughing is a normal part of this illness. If it becomes severe, then a cough suppressant with dextromethorphan (such as Robitussin DM) may be used in children over 2 years old.
- 6) **NASAL CONGESTION:** Suction the nose of infants with a rubber bulb syringe. You may put 2-3 drops of saltwater (saline) nose drops in each nostril before suctioning to help remove secretions. Saline nose drops are available without a prescription. You can make it by adding 1/4 teaspoon table salt in 1 cup of water.
- 7) **FEVER:** Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever, fussiness or discomfort. In infants over six months of age, you may use ibuprofen (Children's Motrin) instead of Tylenol. **[NOTE:** If your child has chronic liver or kidney disease or ever had a stomach ulcer or GI bleeding, talk with your doctor before using these medicines.] (Aspirin should never be used in anyone under 18 years of age who is ill with a fever. It may cause severe liver damage.)



FOLLOW UP as directed by our staff.

RETURN PROMPTLY or contact your doctor if any of the following occur:

- Fever reaches 105 rectal (104 oral) or remains over 102 rectal (101 oral) for more than three days
- Fast breathing (birth to 6 wks: over 60 breaths/min; 6 wk - 2 yr: over 45 breaths/min, 3-6 yr: over 35 breaths/min, 7-10 yrs: over 30 breaths/min, more than 10 yrs old: over 25 breaths/min)
- Earache, sinus pain, stiff or painful neck, headache, repeated diarrhea or vomiting
- Unusual fussiness, drowsiness or confusion
- No wet diapers for 8 hours, no tears when crying, "sunken" eyes or dry mouth