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Wellness Matters

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Your Healthy Body

Stay Healthy: Flu & COVID-19

The arrival of the fall and winter months signals many things, including the beginning of flu season. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu activity peaks between December and February. This means that the COVID-19 pandemic isn't the only public health concern as we approach colder weather.

This combination has public health experts fearing a potential "twindemic" with surges of COVID-19 cases and a deadly flu season. So the CDC is urging the public to take action to be prepared.

Flu Symptoms

Because both the flu and COVID-19 affect the respiratory system, it can be difficult to determine which illness you have. The flu is most often associated with the sudden onset of fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches,

congestion, cough, and sore throat. Most people recover within a few days to less than two weeks. But complications such as pneumonia, bronchitis,



or other infections can occur. Seasonal influenza can cause serious complications for people of any age, but children and the elderly are most vulnerable.

COVID-19 Symptoms

The list of symptoms is long; some experience little to no symptoms while others may experience severe illness. Generally, symptoms can appear two to 14 days following exposure to COVID-19.

The CDC advises the most common COVID-19 symptoms include: fever or chills, cough,

shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, and diarrhea.

Symptom Overlap

The overlapping of some symptoms makes it difficult to determine whether you have the flu or COVID-19 without being tested. If you believe you have either illness, call your doctor and explain your symptoms *before* going to a facility to seek care—this helps limit any risk of spreading COVID-19.

Twindemic Prevention

Physical distancing, wearing a mask, avoiding large gatherings, and more is important. The flu shot is your best chance of preventing the flu. Visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov) for more on prevention. Do your part and take action to help prevent the spread of illness.