

Flu Information for the Colorado College Community

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses are detected year-round in the United States, flu viruses are most common during the fall and winter. Because influenza is a viral infection, it does not respond to antibiotics.

Flu shares many common symptoms with COVID-19, Colds, and Strep.

Therefore, if you feel sick it is very important for you to be evaluated by a medical provider to ensure that you receive the appropriate test(s) and treatment. Call the Student Health Center for an appointment (719-389-6384).

COMPARING SYMPTOMS: ALLERGIES, COLD, STREP THROAT, FLU, and COVID-19				
Illness	Onset	Common Symptoms	Occasional Symptoms	Rare Symptoms
Seasonal Allergies	Abrupt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stuffy/runny nose • Red swollen eyes • Itchy eyes or nose • Cough • Sore Throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheezing • Fatigue • Shortness of Breath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever
Cold	Gradual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runny nose • Sneezing • Sore Throat • Aches & Pains • Mild Cough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Mild to Moderate Chest Discomfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Headache
Strep Throat	Abrupt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sore Throat • Painful Swallowing • Fever • Swollen Lymph Nodes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Rash • Nausea/Vomiting • Aches 	
Flu	Abrupt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Dry Cough • Headache • Fatigue • Aches & Pains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runny nose • Sore Throat • Sneezing • Chest Discomfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
COVID-19 (Some people never develop symptoms)	Gradual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Chills • Dry Cough • Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing • New Loss of Taste or Smell • Fatigue • Headache • Aches & Pains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runny nose (more common in vaccinated people) • Sore Throat • Congestion (more common in vaccinated people) • Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea (before respiratory symptoms) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children

If you feel sick, contact a medical provider for evaluation, treatment, and testing. Call 911 for a medical emergency.

If you get sick, take everyday precautions to protect others:

- Wear a mask when in indoor public spaces
- Limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.
- Contact the Student Health Center for an appointment with a provider to determine appropriate testing and treatment.

If you have been diagnosed with Flu/Influenza:

- **Take Antiviral Drugs, if prescribed by a health care provider.** The Student Health Center works with the Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy who can deliver prescription medications to the Health Center (or to residence halls in some cases).
- **Rest as much as possible.**
- **Increase fluids, using mostly water.**
- **Over-the-counter medications** can provide some relief from Flu symptoms (*follow your medical provider's advice regarding use of over-the-counter medications if you have a chronic health condition or take a regular prescription medication*). Some of these are available at the Student Health Center, and pharmacies like Walgreens also offer home delivery of over-the-counter supplies. For example,
 - Tylenol or Ibuprofen for aches, pains, and fever
 - **Plain Robitussin** for cough or thick mucus in the chest or nasal passages
 - Sudafed or other decongestants for nasal congestion.
- **Stay home until you are better.** If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home except to get medical care or for other necessities for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without use of fever-reducing medicine like Tylenol or Ibuprofen). The Student Health Center can provide you with a thermometer if you do not have one.
- **If your symptoms have not resolved after 10 days**, call the Student Health Center and let them know that you are still feeling ill.
- **If you develop any of the following symptoms, please call the Student Health Center:**
 - shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, ear pain, fluid coming from the ear, greatly increased thirst, or any symptoms that you think are out of proportion to the Flu

Your medical information and care is protected by HIPAA Privacy Rules.

The Release of Information that students signed to share COVID-19 test results with the college, do also apply to Influenza tests due to the overlap in symptoms and the level of community spread that is possible with both illnesses and the need to report flu to our local Health Department. However, it is important that you:

- Contact your faculty member to let them know that you are ill and won't be able to attend class. Students can work directly with faculty to arrange for things like extensions and other strategies for completing the course.
- If your illness is having a significant impact on your ability to complete the course in which you are enrolled, contact the Student Opportunities and Advising Hub (719-389-6655, or AdvisingHub@coloradocollege.edu), and your advisor can help you with things like dropping the block, requesting Excused grades, or changing grade tracks.
- Let your Residential Life Coordinator know that you are ill so that they can be aware of illnesses that might be moving through the community. You can contact your RLC directly, or via resx@coloradocollege.edu.
- Access your support resources, such as friends who might be able to run errands for you.