

## Influenza

Influenza or flu is a viral illness that often occurs in outbreaks over winter.

It usually starts suddenly with fever (39-40 degrees), headache and muscle ache. The fever disappears over 3-5 days. It may take up to 2 weeks to recover fully.

Flu cannot be treated with antibiotics and is usually not dangerous. It can occasionally lead to ear infections or pneumonia. These can be treated by your doctor.

Flu vaccination can reduce your chance of catching flu by 70%. The vaccination is available on the NHS for over 65's, patients with asthma, diabetes or heart disease and certain other 'at-risk' groups. It is available from October every year.

Self care.

### Adults and Children over 12

Drink plenty. Keep room ventilated. Try to avoid coughing over others and wash hands regularly to prevent droplet spread of infection.

You can take paracetamol 1000mg 4 times a day for the ache and fever and can also add ibuprofen 400mg 3 times a day if needed.

### Children under 12

Children will not want to eat. You can give extra fluids and semi solid food such as yoghurt and porridge. Give regular paracetamol liquid and or ibuprofen liquid.

**DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN TO UNDER 16's**

### **When to contact your doctor**

In under 12's

- if fever not reduced by 4<sup>th</sup> day
- child refuses to drink
- has not passed urine during the day
- if child increasingly unwell, vomiting or confused.

**Contact doctor immediately if**

- child breathless or gasping
- pain with breathing
- drowsy or confused
- cannot talk or react to you
- child cannot sit up or cannot bend head forward
- get a rash