Flu season is back: What you need to know

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Featured topic and speaker

Flu season is here, and doctors are seeing a surge in cases across the country. Find out what symptoms to watch for, when to seek treatment, and how to protect yourself and your family from serious illness.

Eli Freiman, MD, explains:

- Common flu symptoms to watch for
- When to contact your doctor
- How antiviral medications can help
- Why the flu vaccine is like a "seat belt, not a forcefield"
- Simple steps to help prevent the spread of flu

If you're concerned about flu or wondering how to treat flu symptoms, talk to your doctor.

Find out what else doctors want patients to know about flu vaccines.

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Speaker

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Transcript

Dr. Freiman: Our emergency department is full of influenza A right now.

I'm probably seeing at least 8 to 10 cases of influenza A a night. And when these patients come into the emergency room, they're really sick.

Every year, millions of Americans get the flu. And for some, it can be serious. You can help prevent the spread of the virus by washing your hands frequently, cleaning high touch areas and staying home if you feel sick.

I'm Dr. Freiman. I'm one of the ER doctors. How can I help today?

You should be aware of the flu symptoms, which can include fever, headache, body aches and cough. We really do see some severe complications from flu. They're dehydrated. They're throwing up. They're having severe diarrhea. And that often means that we need to place IVs, give them IV fluids, get chest X-rays, draw blood work, and sometimes even transfer to intensive care units, in order to make sure that they recover from these most severe cases of flu.

If you think you have the flu, there are treatments that can help lessen your symptoms. But they need to be given early to be most effective. And your doctor can prescribe them.

I think about the flu vaccine like a seat belt, not a force field. It's going to keep you safe from the most severe consequences of the flu. There are ways to prevent the transmission of the flu and to protect yourself from serious complications. If you're concerned about the flu or how to treat it, talk to your doctor.

Disclaimer: This video is for educational purposes only and is not medical advice. If you have questions about your health, please consult your doctor.

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