Flu is a **serious contagious** disease that can lead to **hospitalization** and even **death**.

Flu-like symptoms include:

- fever
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- fatigue

Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

For more information, visit **www.cdc.gov/flu** or **www.flu.gov** or call **800-CDC-INFO**.

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

July 2011
CS225334-A

CDC Says "Take 3" Actions To Fight The Flu

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (the flu):

#1 Take time to get a flu vaccine.

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- The 2011–2012 flu vaccine will protect against an influenza A H3N2 virus, an influenza B virus and the H1N1 virus that emerged in 2009 to cause a pandemic.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as the 2011–2012 vaccines are available.
- Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.
- People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to high risk people.
- Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for them should be vaccinated instead.

#2 Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.

- 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

#3 Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

- If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness.
- Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) and are not available over-the-counter.
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early (within the first 2 days of symptoms) to treat people who are very sick (such as those who are hospitalized) or people who are sick with flu symptoms and who are at increased risk of severe flu illness, such as pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older and people with certain chronic health conditions.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.