



## 2017-2018 Seasonal Influenza Medical Guidance: When to Seek Care

- Always follow your unit's or ship's policy regarding Sick in Quarters (SIQ)
  - Most ships and units have specific guidance on the requirement for an SIQ chit
  - If you require an SIQ chit you must report to the appropriate Medical Department Representative (MDR)
- Symptoms of Influenza include acute respiratory illness:
  - Cough, nasal congestion, sore throat, muscle or body aches, headache, fatigue, chills
  - May or may not include a fever usually greater than 100.4F
  - Symptoms generally last about a week but fatigue may continue for a while longer
- High risk individuals should seek care immediately because antivirals should be started within 48 hours:
  - Pregnant, less than 5 years old or over 65 years old, younger than 19 years old and are receiving long-term aspirin therapy, immunosuppressed (HIV, taking steroids, taking medications that suppress the immune response, organ transplant recipient)
  - Chronic severe medical illness (poorly controlled asthma, chronic respiratory disease, COPD, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, liver disease, sickle cell disease, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, metabolic disorders, neurologic disorders, seizures etc.)
  - Extreme obesity with a Body Mass Index 40 or greater
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
- Serious complications can come from influenza such as pneumonia, sepsis and severe asthma attacks. Seek medical attention immediately if you have:
  - Difficulty breathing, feel short of breath, wheezing
  - Chest pain/stomach pain
  - Sudden dizziness or lightheadedness
  - Severe headache, stiff neck, abnormal confusion
  - Severe or persistent vomiting
  - Fever that doesn't go down with medication or lasts longer than 3 days
  - Dehydration- if you can't replenish fluids by drinking
  - Coughing up blood
  - Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough
  - If you are too weak to stand
- If you live alone and are unable to care for yourself consider seeking medical attention
- Many otherwise healthy individuals are able to recover from influenza without seeking care. Self-care includes:
  - Drink plenty of fluids
  - Over-the-counter fever reducers such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
  - Over-the-counter antihistamines and decongestants for congestion symptoms
  - Get plenty of rest
- Stay SIQ until 24 hours after the fever subsided without medication or after the peak of the respiratory symptoms
- Consider calling the RN advice line in Hampton Roads: 1-800-874-2273 if you have specific questions.

