Flu Facts [1]

Week of:
Jan 31, 2020

Do I have a cold or the flu? [2]

Hi Alice,

I’ve been wicked sick all week with a really bad runny nose, face pain, cough and now my right ear is hurting. I can’t think!! And I am trying to study for exams!!!

My mom told me I have the flu and should go to a doctor to get medicine to treat it. But I think it’s just a wicked bad cold. Can you tell me the difference?

Thanks,
Faucet Nose

Should I get a flu shot? [3]

Dear Alice,

Since winter is approaching soon and it is the time for sniffles and sneezing, what do you think about getting a FLU SHOT as an ounce of prevention?

— Achoo, cough, cough

Recurring flu symptoms or something else? [4]
Dear Alice,

For the past two or three weeks, myself, my wife, and my kids have had flu symptoms on and off. We'll have nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea for about 24 hours, it will go away for a day or two, and then come back. It concerns me as this is not the normal cycle we are accustomed to with the flu. I almost feel we need blood tests or antibiotics or something. What could this be and why does it keep reoccurring?

What's up with FluMist? [5]

Dear Alice,

I have heard numerous reports in the media where they make mention of the "live flu virus" in the flu vaccine, specifically "flu-mist." This is mentioned in conjunction with a warning to avoid contact with this and that (yadda, yadda) for a certain time period. This confuses me. I was under the impression that the flu vaccines contain dead viruses and that it was not possible to catch the flu from the vaccine. Which is it?

Soap and water: Proper handwashing fodder [6]

Dear Alice,

I live on a college campus and have noticed many people do not wash their hands after going to the bathroom! I was so shocked, I confronted one of my friends. She replied: "If I don't get anything icky on my hands, I just rinse them withOUT soap. If my hands do get 'dirty,' I wash them with soap." Is her handwashing philosophy correct? Does rinsing your hands withOUT soap do any good?

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