

By taking suitable measures at home and proper self-care, you can help to ensure health resources go to those who need them most.

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# Swine Flu?

*"I had it like ordinary flu"*



Like Manuel, lots of people have already had Swine flu without any problem.

*Get vaccinated*  
if you are in one of the at-risk groups

*If you have flu, take care of yourself at home*

- Stay resting
- Drink lots of liquids (water, fruit juices...)
- Keep your temperature down with antipyretics



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# TAKE CARE.GET WELL.STAY AT HOME.

## Flu and other diseases caused by a virus:

Flu is a disease which has been around a very long time. It is caused by a virus.

We have all had flu at some time or other, and we know that the illness lasts no more than seven days, which is usually enough for total recovery.

Flu can often be almost symptom-free, and sometimes, when we think we have it, we really have some other virus with very similar symptoms.

When we fall ill with a bacterial infection, we have antibiotics to cure it; but when we go down with a virus our body has to fight alone until health is restored, as antibiotics are of no use against viruses. Our body's defensive capability develops and strengthens each time we come into contact with a virus or other microorganisms.

Some viruses do not change, so when we have suffered illnesses like measles, our body develops lasting defences. In the case of flu viruses, these do change with time, sometimes very rapidly. This is what is now happening with the new Swine flu virus (H1N1), for which our body has no defence.

## How can I know if I have flu?

Recognising this illness is easy, because it behaves like any other flu. You should consider the possibility you have caught it if suddenly you have:

### 1. At least one of these four symptoms:

- Temperature over 38 °C.
- General discomfort.
- Headache.
- Muscular pains.

### 2. Also, at least one of these three symptoms:

- Cough.
- Sore throat.
- Breathing difficulty.



On occasions there may also be nausea and vomiting.

If you have flu, in most cases you will be able to take care of yourself at home.

## Care at home

You are advised to:

- To rest in your own home.
- Drink plenty of liquids (water, fruit juices ...).
- Eat a healthy and balanced diet (fruit and green vegetables...).
- Maintain good general hygiene at home and wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- To control your temperature, use antipyretics, preferably ones containing paracetamol.
- To reduce the risk of infection:
  - Occupy your own well-ventilated area.
  - Let your family, friends and work or study centre know the situation in order to limit visits and contacts between people until 24 hours after the temperature has subsided without needing to use antipyretics.
  - And, if the sick person lives alone, a trusted helper should be on hand to provide assistance if necessary.



## I have flu. When should I contact the health service?

### 1. If you have:

- Difficulty in breathing.
- Sudden worsening of the condition.
- Deterioration after seven days into the illness.
- Chest pain.
- Coughing up blood.
- Bluish or purplish appearance of the skin and lips.
- Giddiness or feeling faint.
- High temperature lasting more than three days.
- Lowered blood pressure.
- Symptoms other than the usual flu ones.

### 2. With children you should watch for the following signs:

- Faster breathing.
- Breathing difficulty.
- Difficulty in waking up.
- Skin rash.
- Nausea.
- Extreme irritability.

### 3. If you develop the usual flu symptoms, even if they are minor, and belong to any of the more vulnerable groups:

- Expectant mothers
- Persons of any age with:
  - Heart diseases (except high blood pressure).
  - Chronic respiratory diseases.
  - Diabetes being treated with drugs.
  - Moderate-serious kidney failure.
  - Advanced chronic liver diseases.
  - Serious neuromuscular diseases.
  - Removed spleen.
  - Moderate or serious blood disorders such as haemoglobinopathies or anaemia.
  - Immunosuppression (including when due to HIV-AIDS, or the taking of prescription drugs, or in transplant recipients).
  - Morbid obesity (body mass index of 40 or more).
  - Minors under 18 receiving prolonged treatment with acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin).

