Prevent the Flu with Good Habits

Protect yourself and others by using good health habits, whether you are able to get a flu shot or not. These habits will help protect you from colds, flu (influenza) and other illnesses spread by contact with germs.

- **Get a flu vaccine every year** if you are 6 months of age and older. Talk with your health care provider to see if the shot or nasal spray is best, or if there are medical reasons for not having vaccine.

- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.** This helps keep your germs from spreading to those around you. Toss the tissue in the trash and be sure to wash your hands. Sneeze into your sleeve or elbow if you do not have a tissue.

- **Wash your hands often to help protect you from germs.**
  - Wash the front and back of your hands and between your fingers for at least 15 seconds. Turn off the faucet with a paper towel.
  - Be sure to wash your hands:
    - After using the bathroom
    - Before and after eating or handling food
    - After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
    - Before and after changing a baby's diaper

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• **Use alcohol based hand sanitizer** if soap and water are not available.

• **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** Germs are often spread when you touch something that has germs on it and then you touch your eyes, mouth or nose.

• **Avoid close contact**, such as kissing, hugging or shaking hands with those that are sick. If you are visiting the hospital and have a cough, you may be asked to wear a mask to protect others from your germs.

• **Get a good night's sleep**, at least 7 hours or more of sleep each day.

• **Get exercise each day**, or for 30 minutes or more, most days of the week. Find an exercise you enjoy to keep your body strong and healthy. Talk with your doctor before starting a new exercise plan.

• **Eat a healthy diet, and drink plenty of fluids a day.** Talk with your doctor or a dietitian to help you with a healthy meal planning.

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Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.