

CLAREMONT UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM

Serving THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

Patient Instructions for Cold and Seasonal Influenza

Persons with influenza have *some or all* of these symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. These symptoms may last 1 to 2 weeks.

Influenza Self Care

If you have been diagnosed with influenza, or strongly suspect that you have it, you should follow these recommendations:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink extra fluids. Warm fluids like tea with honey/lemon and soup may be soothing.
- Gargle with a salt water solution, mouthwash, or use a throat spray as helpful.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve) to reduce fever and lessen headache and body ache.
- Use decongestants (Sudafed), antihistamines (loratadine, diphenhydramine), and cough suppressants (dextromethorphan-DM) as directed to reduce symptoms.
- Take a steamy shower or use a humidifier to relieve nasal congestion.

Methods to Reduce Disease Spread

Shedding of influenza virus, which may indicate contagiousness, can be detected 10 days or more in some cases. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends:

- People with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Use a buddy system for meals.
- Take medication or remedies to reduce cough and sneezing as much as possible.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Then wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds.
- Wipe down common areas daily with an alcohol-based sanitizer.