



# Health Scout



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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

## What is the Flu?

Taken from [www.flufacts.com](http://www.flufacts.com)

The flu, more scientifically known as influenza, is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses. The influenza virus usually enters the body through mucus membranes in the mouth, nose or eyes. When a person with the flu coughs or sneezes, the virus then becomes airborne and can be inhaled by anyone nearby.

In most communities, school-age children are the first age group to get the flu. They then carry it into their home and to places where they interact with other kids, such as after-school activities. The flu virus will usually be prominent during the fall and winter, the time of year typically known as "flu season."

Some people, such as older adults, young children, and people with specific health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications. In extreme cases, complications can lead to death. On average in the United States each year: 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; and about 36,000 people die from the flu.

### How to Know If You Have the Flu

While it's pretty normal to mistake the flu for another ailment such as a cold or just "feeling under the weather," it's important to know the difference — because if it's the flu, the sooner you can get help from your doctor, the better.

If you're not sure it's the flu you have, keep these things in mind. Flu symptoms generally appear 1 to 3 days after exposure to the virus. The onset of symptoms often seems sudden: people describe the feeling "like they've been hit by a truck." Flu symptoms can be mild or severe — and if they're mild can become severe without much notice. Be aware of your body and monitor your body temperature.

The common symptoms of the flu include:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Chills
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Runny nose may also occur but is more common in children than adults
- Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, may also occur but are more common in children than adults

You don't need to experience all of these symptoms to have the flu. If you have one or two, it's recommended that you see your doctor.

## Safety Tips for Trick-or-Treaters

Reprinted from Mr. Jahde's article on [www.davidcitypublicschools.org](http://www.davidcitypublicschools.org) - This article was taken from the October 2008 edition of Cut & Paste.

Halloween is a memorable time in the life of a child. Costumes, parties, and candy make this much celebrated holiday a happy one for most children.

Unfortunately, times have changed and children are often not safe walking alone in the dark. Here are some tips your child should keep in mind when trick-or-treating, adapted from The Children's Safety Zone at [sosnet.com](http://sosnet.com):

- Carry a flashlight.
- Walk, don't run.
- Stay on the sidewalk if possible. If there isn't a sidewalk, walk on the left side of the road facing traffic.
- Obey traffic signals.
- Stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- Don't cut across yards or driveways.
- Wear a watch that can be read in the dark.
- Make sure costumes don't drag on the ground.
- Wear shoes that fit (even if they don't go with your costume).
- Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house.
- Carry only flexible knives, swords, or other props.
- Wear clothing with reflective markings or tape.
- Approach only houses that are lit.
- Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know.