



Differences Between INFLUENZA (the "flu") and Viral GASTROENTERITIS ("stomach flu")

Commonly Asked Questions

	Influenza	Gastroenteritis
What is it?	Very contagious respiratory disease	Infection of the stomach and intestines - often called "stomach flu"
What are the symptoms?	Fever, headache, muscle aches, sore throat, cough, chills, runny nose and fatigue	Nausea, vomiting and or diarrhea, may also have a fever
How is it Spread?	Person to person by direct touching of infected person or by touching articles infected with mucous from person's throat or nose: also spread through the air.	Close contact with infected person (for example, by sharing food, water or eating utensils): may also be spread by eating or drinking contaminated foods or beverages.
Is it Serious?	Biggest danger is it wears your body's ability to fight OTHER infections that you may get while you have the flu such as pneumonia. Sometimes these infections can cause death.	For most people, it is not. Most people recover completely. It is serious for persons such as infants and the elderly who are unable to drink enough fluids to replace what they lose through vomiting or diarrhea.
Can it be Prevented?	YES! Influenza vaccine is a simple prevention, but could save your life. All health care workers should be vaccinated. WASH HANDS frequently and stay home if ill.	Yes. Persons can reduce their chance of getting infected by frequent HANDWASHING prompt disinfection of contaminated surfaces and prompt washing of soiled clothing. There is no vaccine.

For Further Information Contact the Infectious Disease Program at 625-8318 or toll free 1-888-294-6630, ext. 8318.

