

How to prevent the flu this winter



This year the global swine flu pandemic has led to a shortage of flu vaccines. While Momentum Health covers free flu vaccinations for high-risk individuals, the availability of supplies is unfortunately beyond the Scheme's control. Fortunately there are steps you can take to avoid getting seasonal flu.

Steer clear. The flu can spread from person to person when we touch objects handled by a sick person and afterwards touch our face. Don't use your colleague's phone or pen; use the back of your hand to press the lift button; and avoid touching escalator railings and door handles in public places.

You should also give people with the flu a wide berth. While there's no need to be anti-social, it's not a good idea to shake hands with sick friends or kiss someone who's clearly under the weather.

Keep it clean. Wash your hands regularly to get rid of germs. Use soap and warm water, rub your hands vigorously and make sure you clean under your nails.

Sleep enough. You're three times more likely to catch the flu if you sleep seven hours or fewer a night. For your immune system to function properly, you need to get regular, restful sleep. So make sure you get to bed early enough each and every night.

Eat right. Boost your immune system by eating foods rich in vitamin C (citrus fruit, bell peppers), betacarotene (pumpkin, sweet potatoes) and zinc (fish, peanut butter).