

Stop, Wash, and Go To Avoid the Flu During Travel

You don't have to let the flu bug spoil your next trip. A few simple steps can help prevent the spread of flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Before Leaving Home

The most important weapon in fighting the flu is vaccination. For this winter travel season, vaccines are available for both seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu. Vaccines are now available for anyone over age six months but are especially important for travelers in high-risk groups including: pregnant women, people who live with or care for infants younger than six months old, health care and emergency medical services personnel, people between six months and 24 years old, and people 25 to 64 years old with certain medical conditions that put them at high risk for influenza-related complications. Additional information about high-risk target groups can be found online at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/vaccine_keyfacts.htm.

What To Pack

Leave room in your suitcase for a travel health kit. Prevention can be travel-sized, and a well-stocked travel health kit will contain helpful items if you should become ill during your trip. Be sure to include tissues, pain or fever medicine, soap, and an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Protect Yourself and Others

Remember the simple rules of "Stop, wash, and go."

Stop: If you believe you have the flu or are experiencing symptoms, delay your travel plans until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Be sure to remember to cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue. If you don't have a tissue, you should cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve rather than your hands or into the air.

Wash: Afterwards, don't forget the second step: wash. Wash your hands often with soap and water.

If soap and water aren't available, you can use hand sanitizer.

Go: Finally, if you are healthy and actively taking these precautions, feel free to "Go" and enjoy the winter travel season.

To learn more about healthy travel, visit www.cdc.gov/travel.

For more information about 2009 H1N1 flu and travel, visit <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/novel-h1n1-flu.aspx>.

For general information about 2009 H1N1 flu, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu, www.flu.gov, or www.sdhdidaho.org.

If you have not received your H1N1 vaccine, the Southeastern District Health Department on 1901 Alvin Ricken Drive will be holding free H1N1 vaccine walk-in clinics on **Monday, February 1st and 8th at 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.** For additional information, contact the Southeastern District Health Department at 233-9080.

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