Stay Healthy This Season

December 7, 2012

As the days get shorter and the temperature gets lower, the risk of getting sick is increasing. This season, protect yourself and your loved ones from influenza. Commonly called the “flu,” influenza is a serious respiratory illness that causes thousands of hospitalizations and deaths every year. Click here to learn who is most vulnerable and how to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy.

The flu is spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing, or through contact with an infected person. It is typically more severe than a simple cold and may result in other illnesses like pneumonia or bacterial infections, and in some cases, hospitalizations.

Adults 65 years and older are more susceptible to contracting the flu because, as we age, our immune systems weaken. Indeed, people 65 and older account for 6 out of every 10 hospitalizations for the flu, and 9 out of every 10 deaths. Additionally, people with one or more chronic conditions are at an increased risk for flu-related death.

Thankfully, there are simple precautions to minimize your risk of contracting influenza. The Center for Disease Control recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older receive an annual flu shot. Immunization not only protects you from getting the flu, it also helps prevent the spread of influenza to those around you. You should also cover coughs, wash hands, and stay away from people who are sick.

To learn more, visit the Nation Council on Aging.