IS IT
FLU OR COVID-19?

DURING THIS FLU SEASON, IT MAY BE HARD TO TELL THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FLU AND COVID-19. TESTING CAN HELP DETERMINE IF YOU ARE SICK WITH THE FLU OR COVID-19.

The best way to protect yourself from the flu is to get a flu vaccine. For more information or to find a location to get your flu vaccine, visit **nyc.gov/flu**, call **311** or text "flu" to **877-877**. For more information on COVID-19, visit **nyc.gov/health/coronavirus**.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF FLU AND COVID-19?

The flu and COVID-19 are caused by different viruses, but may have similar symptoms. Common symptoms for both flu and COVID-19 include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. COVID-19 may also cause a loss of taste or smell. Both infections may lead to pneumonia, other severe complications, hospitalization or death.

Symptoms for both the flu and COVID-19 may appear shortly after exposure. However, it may take longer for a person to develop symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms for COVID-19 may appear two to 14 days after exposure to COVID-19, whereas symptoms for flu may appear one to four days after exposure. Many people who have COVID-19 do not have any symptoms at all, whereas people with flu generally have symptoms.

HOW DO THE FLU AND COVID-19 SPREAD?

› Both are spread to people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) with a person who is infected, and through droplets that are sprayed when a person coughs, sneezes, sings or talks.

› People who have no symptoms can spread both flu and COVID-19.

› It may be possible for people to get the flu or COVID-19 by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. Although this is not thought to be the main way these viruses are spread, this is why frequent handwashing with soap and water is important.

WHO IS AT RISK OF SEVERE ILLNESS FROM THE FLU?

Older adults, people with underlying health conditions and people who are pregnant may be at higher risk of severe illness from both flu and COVID-19.

Children under 5 years old are at higher risk of severe illness from the flu than COVID-19. However, infants and children who have underlying health conditions are at higher risk of severe illness from both flu and COVID-19.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM THE FLU AND COVID-19?

All New Yorkers should get a flu vaccine, especially children under age 5, adults over age 50, people who are pregnant or may be pregnant, or people with other medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease or HIV. The flu vaccine is safe, quick and is covered by most health insurance plans, including Medicaid.

The flu vaccine **does not** protect against COVID-19. It is important to continue to follow the four key actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

› **Stay home if sick**: Stay home if you are sick except for essential medical care (including COVID-19 testing) or other essential errands.

› **Physical distancing**: Stay at least 6 feet away from others.

› **Wear a face covering**: Protect those around you. You can be contagious without symptoms and spread the disease when you cough, sneeze or talk. Face coverings help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

› **Practice healthy hand hygiene**: Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; clean frequently touched surfaces regularly; avoid touching your face with unwashed hands; and cover your cough or sneeze with your arm, not your hands.

WHERE CAN I GET A FLU VACCINE?

The flu vaccine is available at low cost or for free at many locations around New York City (NYC). Check with your regular health care provider or your local pharmacy. For more information or to find a location to get your flu vaccine, visit **nyc.gov/flu**, call **311** or text "flu" to **877-877**.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE FLU OR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?

› **Stay home!** Do not leave home except to get tested and other essential medical care or to get basic needs such as groceries, if someone cannot get them for you. Do not go to work, even if you are an essential worker.

› **Consult with your health care provider!** Call your health care provider if you have symptoms, especially if you are an older adult, pregnant or have a health condition that puts you at increased risk for severe illness. You may be able to get early treatment with antiviral medication for the flu to reduce the severity of illness and complications. If you do not have a health care provider, call **311** or 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692). You can get care in NYC regardless of your immigration status or ability to pay. Call **911** right away if you experience trouble breathing, persistent high fever, or inability to keep food down.

› **Get tested!** If your health care provider does not offer testing for COVID-19, visit **nyc.gov/covidtest** to find a testing site near you or call **311**. Many sites offer free testing.

TO FIND A LOCATION TO GET YOUR FLU VACCINE:
visit **nyc.gov/flu** | call **311** | text "flu" to **877-877**

NYC
Health

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.   10.06.20