

What's the Difference?

Seasonal Flu and Ebola Virus Disease (Ebola)

Seasonal flu and Ebola have a few similar symptoms, like fever and weakness. This may cause you to worry about your health. But, it is very important to know that the risk of getting Ebola in the U.S. and LA County is very low. You are only at risk if you have had direct contact with an individual who has Ebola. If you came back from a country affected by Ebola within the last 21 days and develop fever or other symptoms, call your doctor right away, and mention your travel. Without such a travel history, it is much more likely that your symptoms are a sign of the flu. Get a seasonal flu vaccine to protect your health and avoid undue concern about Ebola. This will prevent the spread of flu for you and those around you.

	SEASONAL FLU	EBOLA
1. What is it?	A respiratory illness caused by flu viruses (germs). People who get the flu usually get better on their own. But, the flu can be serious and even fatal. Flu can spread year-round, but most cases happen from November through February.	A virus (germ) that causes hemorrhagic fever disease. This disease causes fever, unusual bleeding, and can often lead to death. Right now, there is a large Ebola outbreak in West African countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Mali).
2. Who is at risk?	Anyone can get the flu. But, people more likely to have serious health problems are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants and young children • Pregnant women • People 65 years of age or older • Smokers • People who are overweight or obese • People with chronic health problems, like lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, neurological problems (problems with their nervous system), and weak immune systems 	The risk of getting infected with Ebola in the U.S. and LA County is very low. Those who are at risk lived in or traveled from a country with an Ebola outbreak, and had contact with the blood or body fluids of someone who was sick with or died from Ebola, within the past 21 days.
3. How is it spread?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From person-to-person through droplets from a sick person's cough or sneeze. • By touching something with the virus living on it, such as a doorknob, and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. • People can spread flu before they show signs of this illness. People who have mild signs of flu illness can also spread this disease. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From person-to-person by direct contact with a patient's body fluids, like saliva, blood, vomit, urine, feces, and sweat, or with objects that have been infected with body fluids, like needles. • Only people who are showing signs of Ebola can spread this disease. People who don't have symptoms can't spread Ebola. • People who have unprotected contact with the body of someone who died from Ebola, like while preparing the body for burial, may get infected.

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4. What are the symptoms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Headache • Tiredness • Dry cough • Sore throat • Stuffy nose • Body aches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Headache • Weakness • Diarrhea • Vomiting • Stomach pain • Lack of appetite • Abnormal bleeding, like oozing from the gums or blood in the feces
5. How is it treated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people don't need medical care and will get better on their own with rest and fluids. • Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®), ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®), or naproxen (Aleve®) for fever and body aches—DO NOT take aspirin. • If you have severe illness or are more likely to have serious health problems, your doctor may prescribe antivirals. Antivirals don't guarantee the flu will go away or be less contagious. 	<p>Right now there is no specific medicine or vaccine to cure Ebola. Medical care focuses on keeping the patient alive by giving fluids and managing serious health problems that can happen. But some experimental treatments are being developed.</p>
6. How is it prevented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get your flu vaccine each year. Flu viruses change over time, so the flu vaccine is updated each year. • Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. • Wash your hands often, using soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers. • Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. • Avoid close contact, like kissing and sharing utensils, with sick people • If you're sick, stay home for at least 24 hours after fever ends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk of getting Ebola in the U.S. and LA County is very low. • You can only get Ebola if you have had direct contact with the body fluids of someone who is sick with or died from Ebola. • Avoid unnecessary travel to countries in West Africa that are affected by Ebola. • Recent travelers from these countries should take their temperature two times a day for 21 days after they return to the U.S. If you get a fever, contact your doctor and mention your travel.
7. For more information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the LA County Department of Public Health's Flu web page at: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/flu/FluLocatorMain.htm • Dial 2-1-1 from any LA County phone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the LA County Department of Public Health's Ebola web page at: http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/ebola.htm • Dial 2-1-1 from any LA County phone