How Long Should I Stay Home if I Have Influenza-Like Illness?
Guidance for the Public During the Influenza Season

What is an “influenza-like illness”?
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines an influenza-like illness (ILI) as having:
- fever with a temperature of 100°F (37.8°C) or greater; AND
- a cough and/or a sore throat;
- no other known cause of the above symptoms

How long should a person with influenza-like illness stay home?
- People with influenza-like illness should stay home until at least 24 hours after the person is without fever (100°F or 37.8°C) or signs of a fever (without use of a fever reducing medicine). The sick person should stay home throughout the entire exclusion period, except to get medical care or for other necessities.

What are fever-reducing medications?
- Medicines that can bring down a person's fever include acetaminophen (for example, Tylenol®) or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as ibuprofen (for example Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®) or, naproxyn (for example Aleve®).

- (Note: aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) also reduces fever, but do NOT give aspirin to children or teenagers who have the flu; because this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye’s syndrome).

- Check the ingredients on the package label on over-the-counter cold and flu medicines, as some of them may already contain acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin.


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