

People at High Risk of Developing Flu-Related Complications

Most people who get the flu (either seasonal or 2009 H1N1) will have mild illness, will not need medical care or antiviral drugs, and will recover in less than two weeks. Some people, however, are more likely to get flu complications that result in being hospitalized and occasionally result in death. Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus infections and ear infections are examples of flu-related complications. The flu can also make chronic health problems worse. For example, people with asthma may experience asthma attacks while they have the flu, and people with chronic congestive heart failure may have worsening of this condition that is triggered by the flu. The list below includes the groups of people more likely to get flu-related complications if they get sick from influenza.

People at High Risk for Flu Complications:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant women
- People who have:
 - Cancer
 - Blood disorders (including sickle cell disease)
 - Chronic lung disease [such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)]
 - Diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - Kidney disorders
 - Liver disorders
 - Neurological disorders (such as epilepsy, cerebral palsy, brain or spinal cord injuries, moderate to profound intellectual disability or developmental delay)
 - Neuromuscular disorders such as muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis
 - Weakened immune systems such as people with HIV or AIDS or who are on medications that weaken the immune system

