What is the Flu? Influenza is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year. People who have the flu typically experience any or all of these signs and symptoms that usually start suddenly within hours, not days:

- Fever, usually greater than 101, and/or chills
- Cough (usually not producing mucous)
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches, headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)