



# Is It “The Flu” or Something You Ate?

Food poisoning sickens 76 million consumers per year according to latest government statistics. Sometimes it's not always easy to tell the difference between foodborne illness and influenza, especially since both show similar symptoms.

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is caused by a virus that infects the respiratory tract. Foodborne disease, referred to as food poisoning, is carried or transmitted to humans by food containing harmful substances.

SYMPTOMS	“THE FLU”	FOOD POISONING
Body aches and Pains	Common: headache and muscle aches	Common: headache, backache and stomach cramps
Fatigue	Common (often extreme)	Common (often extreme)
Fever	Common	Common
Gastrointestinal: Vomiting	Rarely prominent*	Common (often severe)
Gastrointestinal: Nausea	Rarely prominent*	Common
Gastrointestinal: Diarrhea	Rarely prominent*	Common
Respiratory: Chest discomfort, cough	Common (often extreme, can become severe)	Rare
Respiratory: Nasal congestion, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose	Common	Rare
<b>PREVENT OR LESSEN RISK</b>	<b>ANNUAL VACCINATION</b>	<b>PROPER FOOD HANDLING</b>

\* Although nausea, vomiting and diarrhea can sometimes accompany influenza infection, especially in children, gastrointestinal symptoms are rarely prominent.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

**IF YOU THINK YOU ARE ILL,  
ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE A FEVER, SEE YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.**

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