



# What You Need to Know During Flu Season



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

During the Holiday season, family and friend get-togethers can bring about many opportunities to spread viruses, especially the flu.

## Flu Activity Q&A\*

**Q: What sort of flu season is expected this year?**

**A:** It is not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. While flu spreads every year, the timing, severity, and length of the season varies from one season to another.

**Q: Will new flu viruses circulate this season?**


**A:** Flu viruses are constantly changing so it's not unusual for new flu viruses to appear each year.

**Q: When will flu activity begin and when will it peak?**

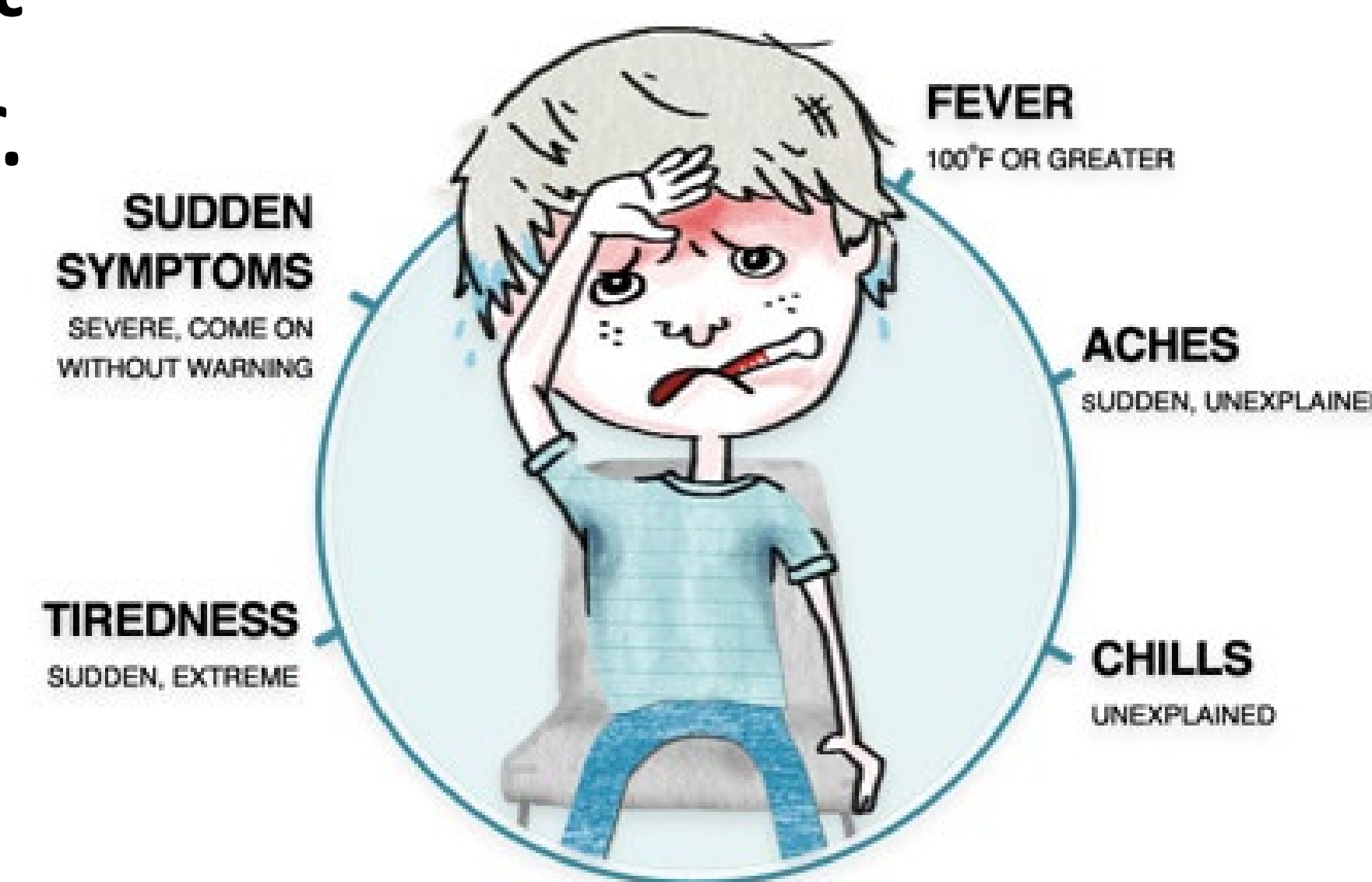
**A:** The timing of flu is unpredictable and can vary. Seasonal flu viruses can be detected year-round; however, seasonal flu activity often begins as early as October and November and can continue to occur as late as May. Flu activity most commonly peaks in the United States between December and February.

## How do you know if you have the Flu?

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

Is it a cold or flu? 		
Signs and Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Symptom onset	Abrupt	Gradual
Fever	Usual	Rare
Aches	Usual	Slight
Chills	Fairly common	Uncommon
Fatigue, weakness	Usual	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common
Chest discomfort, cough	Common	Mild to moderate
Headache	Common	Rare

The Most Common Flu Symptoms are:



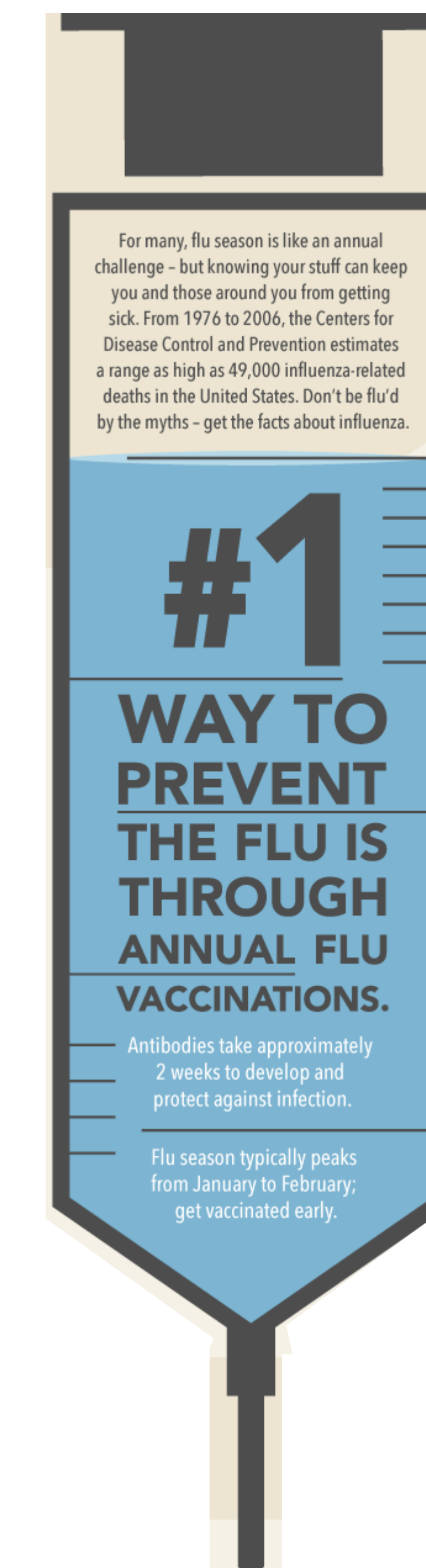
The Flu can bring about Complications like:

- Sinusitis
- Bronchitis
- Pneumonia

People with weakened immune systems like older adults or young children are at higher risk for developing serious complications from the flu.

**In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense.**

## What Should You do To Protect Yourself from the Flu?



In addition, you can take everyday preventive actions like staying away from sick people and washing your hands to reduce the spread of germs. If you are sick with flu, stay home from work or school to prevent spreading flu to others. In addition, there are prescription medications called antiviral drugs that can be used to treat influenza illness.



For More information

Call the West Windsor Health Department at 609-799-2400  
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