# Influenza Disease

### What is influenza disease?
- Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus.
- The virus infects the nose, throat, and lungs.
- It can cause mild to severe illness, hospitalization, and even death.

### What are the symptoms?
- Anyone can get flu and it strikes suddenly and can last several days.
- Symptoms of flu disease may include:
  - Fever or feeling feverish/chills
  - Cough
  - Sore throat
  - Runny or stuffy nose
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headaches
  - Fatigue (very tired)
  - Vomiting and diarrhea

### How does influenza disease spread?
- Flu is spread by:
  - An infected person's droplets from cough, sneeze or talk enter the mouth, eye or nose.
  - Touching a surface or object with flu virus on it and then touching mouth, eyes or nose.
- An infected person can infect others 1 day before symptoms start and up to 5 to 7 days after symptoms start.
- Some people, especially young children and people with weakened immune systems, might be able to infect others for an even longer time.

### How do I prevent the flu?
- Get a yearly flu vaccine.
- Wash your hands properly and often.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with arm.
- Clean and sterilize surfaces.
- Stay home if you are sick.

### Where can I find more information?
- Ask your doctor.
- Call the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at 1-800-469-4599.
- Go to cdc.gov and type influenza in the SEARCH box.



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1-800-469-4599 www.adph.org/imm 2/29/16