

It's Flu Season



More than 60,000 people in the US have had the flu already this year. In South Carolina, there have been 106 flu related deaths, with 77 of those over the age of 65.

Is it a Cold or the Flu?

This year is different because H3N2 is the main strain of flu and has a higher intensity of symptoms, more frequent hospitalizations and deaths.

Here are some of the differences between a cold and the flu. Some symptoms are present in both cold and flu; however, there are some very clear signs of the flu:

- ❖ **Flu symptoms are usually more intense:** you have muscle and body aches, which can be severe; colds may have body aches, but are usually less severe
- ❖ **Flu symptoms appear quickly:** colds develop more slowly; with the flu, you can go from well to sick within a few hours
- ❖ **Your body feels more run down with the flu:** you feel completely exhausted and it can last for weeks; you can force yourself to go to work with a cold
- ❖ **If you think you have the flu, see a doctor as soon as possible** for a prescription like Tamiflu, which can help reduce the time you have the illness; however, you must get treatment within the first 48 hours of the onset of flu symptoms
- ❖ **Other recommendations:**
 - get plenty of rest
 - stay hydrated (drink a lot of water)
 - eat well and include soups which is an easy way to get a lot of nutrients without a lot of cooking
 - use a humidifier to help you breathe easier
- ❖ **If your symptoms get worse, go back to your doctor** for additional treatment.
- ❖ **High fevers of 103 or 104 degrees Fahrenheit are serious** and can lead to other illnesses like bronchitis, pneumonia and sinusitis.