

# Fighting the Flu

[Wes Studi speaking in Cherokee language] Hello. I'm Wes Studi. I am Cherokee.

[Wes Studi] I know the problems the spread of illness can cause native people. Each year, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized with flu. Like all Americans, native peoples and tribal communities need to protect themselves. Flu spreads mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing.

[Man #1] (Coughs)

[Woman #1] Are you okay?

[Man #1] I don't know. I -- I just don't know.

[Wes Studi] People can also get infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Symptoms of flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, headaches, chills, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. There's an old saying -- "Take two and call me in the morning." But to protect yourself against the flu, take three. It could save your life. The best way to protect yourself, your family, and your community against flu is to get vaccinated. Ask your health care provider for a seasonal flu vaccine as early as possible.

[Woman #2] Let's wash our hands, okay?

[Wes Studi] Wash your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand cleaners frequently.

[Woman #2] Get 'em really good in between fingers and the outsides. [Chuckles]

[Wes Studi] You can also help reduce your risk of becoming ill with flu by staying away from sick people. [All coughing]

[Man #2] I'll get a hold of your wife, and we can take care of the...cooking -- the...um...wow. I really need to be going. I think I'm gonna have to take off.

[Wes Studi] If you're sick, protect others by staying home from work or school. Cover your coughs and sneezes to avoid the spread of germs. Not everyone with the flu will have a fever. Most people with the flu have mild symptoms, but for others, flu can be more serious.

[Man #2] How are you feeling there?

[Man #3] Just lost track of all time.

[Man #2] (Sighs) Take care of yourself. Get some rest.

[Wes Studi] When flu is widespread across our communities, our priority is to treat people at highest risk for severe disease as early as possible.

[Woman #3] (Coughs)

[Doctor] We will treat you. But not to be alarmed, because it won't harm the pregnancy.

[Wes Studi] Pregnant women, young children, the elderly, and people with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease are more likely to suffer from serious complications. If you do get the flu, take medicines called antivirals that can help. People at highest risk for severe flu should receive antivirals as soon as flu symptoms develop.

[Doctor] What other symptoms are you having?

[Woman #3] (Coughs) I just -- my throat hurts, runny nose, I'm sneezing. I just -- I'm hot all the time. I just -- I feel terrible.

[Doctor] We will treat you with an antiviral medication.

[Wes Studi] They can make you feel better faster or make your symptoms milder.

[Woman #4] How are you feeling, Jeffrey?

[Jeffrey] I'm feeling great.

[Wes Studi] Protect yourself, your family, and your community from the flu. Get vaccinated every year. Cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often, and if you're sick, stay home. Protect the circle of life. Know the facts about the flu.

[Wes Studi speaking in Cherokee language] Take real good care of yourselves.