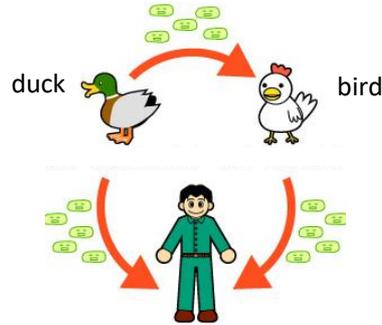


# What is Influenza

Hokesen Letter No 187

In general, ducks bring flu virus to human. In summer ducks are in northern parts of the Eurasia and comes across to Japan in autumn. They spread flu virus to other birds and animals. Then flu virus spread to human. The virus cause flu in humans.



The flu is a highly contagious and common illness that is caused by the influenza virus. There are three different types of flu viruses. Only influenza A and B are related to humans.

People can get the flu any time of year, but most of the Northern Hemisphere, flu season spans late fall to early spring.

Flu activity typically peaks between December and March.

## Causes of the Flu

There are many different strains of the flu virus, and they mutate often. This is why people continue to come down with the flu year after year. The flu is a very contagious illness that spreads easily. Coughs and sneezes are strong enough to transmit droplets from the mouth and nose. You can also get the flu through personal contact (handshakes or hugs), saliva (kissing or sharing drinks), and by touching contaminated surfaces (doorknobs or faucets).

## What to Expect

The flu symptoms can last anywhere from two to seven days.

Some flu symptoms may be similar to cold symptoms.

The key difference between cold and flu symptoms, however, is severity. A cold tends to start slowly and gradually get worse over a few days. Flu symptoms can make you feel pretty lousy, but they usually aren't severe enough to disrupt your life. The flu hits you all at once and completely wipes you out, rendering you unable to go about your daily routine.

Common symptoms of the flu include: fever, headaches, body aches and extreme fatigue.

If you think you might have the flu, contact your health care provider as soon as you develop symptoms.

He or she can perform a flu test or diagnose you based on your symptoms and determine the best course of treatment for you.

Influenza is a virus that actually has hundreds of different strains.

**History of Influenza A** All of the major flu pandemics in modern history have been caused by influenza A viruses.

The 1918 pandemic—also known as the Spanish flu—was caused by an influenza A virus.