



**District Health Services**  
**Fall Update: Viral Respiratory Diseases**  
**December 2025**



**Protect Yourself and Others from Flu, RSV, Pneumonia, and Other Respiratory Illnesses**

As the weather cools, viral respiratory diseases such as flu, RSV, pneumonia, and COVID-19 tend to spread more easily. These illnesses can affect people of all ages but pose the greatest risk to young children, older adults, and individuals with weakened immune systems. Currently, several respiratory illnesses are beginning to circulate in Georgia. In response, we are sharing the following information and preventive measures to help protect you and those around you. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health officials strongly encourage everyone to take steps to reduce the spread of respiratory infections.

Taking simple preventive actions such as staying home when sick, washing your hands often, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying up to date on recommended vaccines can help safeguard your health throughout the season.

**Preventive Measures**

To reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses, follow these recommended steps:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with individuals who are sick. If you are sick, limit contact with others.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of tissues promptly.
- Avoid touching your face—especially your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Stay home at least 24 hours after your fever has resolved (without the use of fever-reducing medication).

Updated vaccines are available for flu, COVID-19, and RSV for eligible groups. Vaccination is especially important for those at higher risk of complications, including young children, pregnant individuals, people with chronic health conditions, and adults 65 years and older.

- Everyone 6 months and older should receive an annual flu vaccine.
- Vaccination is especially important for those at higher risk of complications, including young children, pregnant individuals, people with chronic health conditions, and adults 65 years and older.
- For COVID-19: if you have symptoms, stay home, get tested, and seek treatment if recommended.
- Updated vaccines are available for flu, COVID-19, and RSV for eligible groups. Vaccination is especially important for those at higher risk of complications, including young children, pregnant individuals, people with chronic health conditions, and adults 65 years and older.

**Return to School**

Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infections. When a person can return to school depends on the nature of the illness. For general symptoms that may present from a respiratory illness, policies can allow return to the school setting when:

- The child has no fever for at least 24 hours without taking fever medicine.
- If the child had a fever and a new rash, the rash has been assessed by a healthcare provider, and the child has no fever for at least 24 hours without taking fever medicine.
- Any open skin sores are now drying or crusted, and the child is getting treatment from a doctor.
- If vomiting, stay home for at least 24 hours from the last vomiting episode.
- Respiratory virus symptoms are getting better overall for at least 24 hours.

To ensure the health and safety of students, staff, and families, we urge everyone to follow these precautions. The Office of District Health Services (DHS) works closely with the Fulton County Board of Health to monitor, report, and manage respiratory illnesses and outbreaks.

If you have not had your seasonal respiratory illness vaccines and are not currently sick, contact your local health provider, retail pharmacy, or Fulton County Board of Health for seasonal respiratory illness vaccines.

For more information, please contact your healthcare provider or the Fulton County Board of Health at **770-520-7500**. To learn more about how to stay healthy this fall and winter, click on the link:  
<https://fultoncountyboh.com/preventing-viral-respiratory-diseases-during-cooler-months/>

Additionally, information can be found at the following links:

- [Protect yourself from COVID-19, Flu, and RSV](#)
- [Mycoplasma pneumoniae Information](#)
- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Why Are They Sick: <https://www.choa.org/parent-resources/covid-19/difference-between-flu-covid19-cold-rsv>
- [Everyday Actions for Schools to Prevent and Control the Spread of Infections | CDC - https://www.cdc.gov/orr/school-preparedness/infection-prevention/actions.html](https://www.cdc.gov/orr/school-preparedness/infection-prevention/actions.html)
- [When Students or Staff are Sick | CDC - https://www.cdc.gov/orr/school-preparedness/infection-prevention/when-sick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/orr/school-preparedness/infection-prevention/when-sick.html)

**References:** The Centers for Disease Control, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and the Fulton County Board of Health.

If you need this document in another language, email [districtlanguageassistance@fultonschools.org](mailto:districtlanguageassistance@fultonschools.org) or call 470-254-6827.