

ARE YOU THAT GUY? WITH FLU Americans and the Flu: Facts and Faux Pas

Have you ever gone out in public when you thought you might have influenza (the flu)? If you said yes, you're not alone in making a flu season faux pas. A recent survey found that nearly two-thirds (64%) of those who had the flu in the past three years admit to being "That Guy," who despite experiencing flu symptoms, continues to go about his/her daily activities.

As part of its "Are You That Guy?" influenza education campaign, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) polled Americans to assess their knowledge and understanding of flu symptoms; what they do to prepare for the upcoming flu season; and perceptions of what behaviors Americans should and shouldn't practice when they have the flu.

The survey found that nearly two-thirds (67%) of Americans are not concerned about the upcoming flu season and only 9% plan to check with their doctor to see what they should do if they get the flu. Only slightly more than half (55%) indicated that they will plan to get a vaccination this season to prevent the flu.

NFID reminds Americans that influenza is highly contagious and is associated with, on average, more than 200,000 hospitalizations, thousands of deaths every year in the U.S, and substantial medical costs. Vaccination and good hygiene habits are important steps to avoid getting the flu. If you have flu symptoms, it's important to act quickly, see a doctor and follow your doctor's advice. No one wants to be 'That Guy' who puts others at risk for flu.

The survey was conducted through ORC International's Online CARAVAN survey in October 2011 and includes a national sample of 1,044 consumers, 18 years of age or older.

FLU FUNDAMENTALS: Knowledge and understanding of flu symptoms

While most Americans believe they do an excellent/good job of self-diagnosing the flu, in reality, they often have a limited understanding of flu fundamentals.

- Survey results showed that Americans correctly recognized only 2.8 out of five common flu symptoms
- Only 13% correctly identified all five common flu symptoms; and another 13% of respondents could not identify any of the five common flu symptoms

Americans may have a false sense of security and think that once they have symptoms of the flu, they will have time to prepare.

- A majority (58%) incorrectly believe that they can feel the flu coming on for several days before they get sick. In reality, unlike a cold, the flu strikes suddenly with little warning



PREPARING FOR FLU SEASON: How do Americans prepare for flu season?

A majority of Americans are not concerned about the upcoming flu season.

- Two-thirds (67%) are not very or not at all concerned

Americans are not proactive when it comes to preparing for or treating the flu.

- Only 9% plan to check with their doctor to see what they should do if they get the flu
- Only slightly more than half (55%) indicate they will get a flu vaccination this season

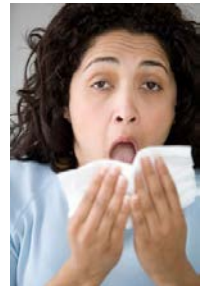
FLU ETIQUETTE: Americans behaviors during flu season. Are we doing the right thing?

Americans are not shy about telling others who have flu symptoms what to do.

- More than six out of 10 (63%) say that they feel comfortable or somewhat comfortable telling “That Guy” that he/she is sick and should stay away from others

Of survey respondents who had the flu in the past three years (n=371), nearly two-thirds (64%) admit to being “That Guy” who despite exhibiting flu symptoms, goes about his or her daily activities.

- Almost all (91%) agree or somewhat agree “That Guy” should not touch others or stand too close to them to avoid spreading the flu
- When they see “That Guy,” a majority (58%) move as far away as possible from him/her
- Eight out of 10 respondents strongly agree (39%) or somewhat agree (42%) “That Guy” should cancel any social obligations while he/she is sick



Despite knowing better, when they themselves are “That Guy”, Americans continue social interactions even if they have flu symptoms

- Three out of four Americans (75%) would go to at least one social situation if they had symptoms of the flu (out of a list of seven)
 - 60% would go to class for a major exam
 - 58% would go to work if a major report were due
 - 50% would go to their child’s debut in the school play
 - 45% would board a plane to go on vacation
 - 40% would get on a plane for a business trip
 - 28% would celebrate their wedding anniversary with dinner with their spouse
 - 24% would attend their grandmother’s 80th birthday party

Personal relationships impact whether or not Americans practice flu etiquette

- Americans worry more about spreading the flu to other members of their household (83%) than about spreading it to strangers in public places (58%)
- A majority of those surveyed would go to school or work with flu symptoms, but only 24% would go to their grandmother’s 80th birthday party or to dinner on their anniversary with their spouse (28%)
- More than four out of ten would get on a plane to go on vacation (45%) or to go on a business trip (40%) even if they thought they were coming down with the flu

EXPERIENCE WITH THE FLU: How Americans handle the flu

Americans are not proactive in using or seeking out flu treatments

- A majority (53%) of Americans know that there are prescription medications for flu; however, only one-third (36%) would call their doctor if they think they have the flu



Among those who have had the flu in the past three years (n=371), one in four downplayed how sick they felt and told themselves and others “it was just a cold.”

- While 41% said coping with the physical symptoms of the flu was the biggest challenge, one-third (34%) indicated the biggest challenge was struggling with work, school, or other commitments
- Almost half (45%) continued on with their planned activities even though they had the flu

With age comes wisdom. Older Americans are more proactive than younger Americans in managing the flu.

- Americans 55 years of age or older are more likely (49%) to know that the flu strikes suddenly; 68% of those under the age of 35 incorrectly believe you can feel the flu coming on for several days
- Those 65 years of age or older are most likely (46%) to call their doctor if they think they have the flu and also more likely (82%) to plan on getting a flu vaccination

ABOUT ORC INTERNATIONAL’S ONLINE CARAVAN SURVEY

The survey was conducted between October 10 and 12, 2011. The findings are based on national sample of 1,044 consumers, 18 years of age or older. Responses were weighted by five variables including age, sex, geographic region, race and education to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population.

The “Are You That Guy?” influenza education campaign and survey is supported by Genentech, a member of the Roche Group.

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