1. Take time to get a flu vaccine early this season.
   - Flu is a serious, contagious disease that can lead to hospitalization and even death.
   - CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
   - While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three or four viruses that research suggests will be most common.
   - Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as this season’s vaccines are available. Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated.
   - Vaccination of high-risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children; pregnant women; people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
   - Vaccination also is important for health care workers and other people who live with or care for high-risk people to keep from spreading flu to them.

2. Continue to take the preventive actions you follow now to stop COVID-19 spread:
   - Wear a mask in public.
   - Stay at least six feet apart from people you don’t live with, even when masked.
   - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
   - If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home and limit contact with others. CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
   - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
   - Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
   - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
   - Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
Flu-like symptoms include:
- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue

3. Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.
- If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness.
- Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) and are not available over-the-counter.
- Antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They can also prevent serious flu complications, like pneumonia.
- It’s very important that antiviral drugs be used early (within the first 2 days of symptoms) to treat people who are very sick with the flu and people who are sick with the flu and have a greater chance of getting serious flu complications, either because of their age or because they have a high-risk medical condition. Other people also may be treated with antiviral drugs by their doctor this season.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms, without fever.

Flu and COVID-19 viruses share many of the same symptoms. If you experience flu-like symptoms, avoid contact with others and and call your doctor's office for guidance or use Franciscan Virtual Urgent Care. Learn more about our virtual urgent care option at http://www.chifranciscan.org/virtualcare.