

# Flu Surge Impacting Medical Service and Telephone Wait Times.

**This year's flu season has impacted Southern California harder than anticipated by the health community. Some emergency rooms, medical offices, and hospitals are experiencing overcrowding and long wait times – not just at Kaiser Permanente, but throughout Southern California.**

**We are making every effort to staff up to maximum capacity for in-person and phone visits. And, we are reaching out to remind members that there are several ways to receive care.**

**Here are some tips we'd like to share:**

## **Understanding the Flu**

People often use “flu” to describe a mild cold or illness, but there’s nothing mild about the flu. You can go to [kp.org/flu](https://kp.org/flu) to view a list of frequently asked flu questions, health guidelines, and symptoms.

## **Accessing Care**

As always, if you feel that you are having a medical emergency, you should call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. However, if you are experiencing general flu-like symptoms you can:

- **Call for a telehealth appointment.** A doctor can call back, often within an hour, to discuss symptoms and, if needed, provide a prescription right over the phone that can be picked up from any Kaiser Permanente pharmacy.
- **Go online to [kp.org](https://kp.org)** to schedule a non-urgent appointment with your primary doctor. You may be able to schedule a same-day appointment, especially if you are willing to be seen by another doctor or nurse practitioner.
- **Visit one of our Target Clinics** for care. [Click here](#) for a list of expanded Southern California location and hours.

## **Visiting Urgent Care**

Should you feel that your symptoms are more severe, you should go to Urgent Care, though please understand that due to the current flu season you may experience a significantly long wait time.

## **Getting a Flu Shot**

It's not too late to get vaccinated. It is still the safest and most effective way to protect against the flu, and symptoms are likely to be less severe if you do get sick. Visit [business.kaiserpermanente.org](https://business.kaiserpermanente.org) for [tips and tools](#) you can use to keep you informed about the flu.