



# The Enza

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Influenza, or “The Flu,” as it is commonly known—I guess everyone thought “The Enza” sounded really stupid—paid an unwelcome visit to my immune system last Monday night at about 6:30 p.m. No phone call, no e-mail, no letter, absolutely no warning that the visit was coming. The only clue I got was a viral strain's version of a doorbell ring—sudden, overwhelming stomach quakes.

What followed was what I can only describe as my best impression of a septic tank. I had gross bodily fluid coming out of every hole imaginable. I think I shit out of my eardrum at one point. My ass was like a science experiment—it went from solid, to liquid, to gas.

Grossed out yet? No? Good, because it gets worse. Upon emptying out the contents of my stomach, I decided to lie down in my bed, drink lots of water and watch back-to-back episodes of *Roseanne* (the old episodes, when Roseanne was still Barr, Becky was still Lecy Goranson and Tom Arnold was still serving them coffee). I decided to just pass out and let the germs have their fun while I was unconscious. Nothing could make me feel worse at this point.

“I’ll take ‘Speaks Too Soon’ for \$200 dollars, Alec.”

I was suddenly awakened by nausea so powerful I actually had to jump out of bed and run to the washroom. I haven't barfed this violently since (submit your own bitchy comment here—I'll get you started with “since I saw *Glitter* on Cinemax”).

I did the ever-popular “spray through the fingers” barf, where one thinks that by covering one's mouth you can hold the puke at bay and give the feet precious seconds to reach the toilet. FYI, this never works. Ever. You don't actually hold the vomit back; instead, you end up doing your impression of a bulimic lawn fountain. Now not only was I yacking, my hand was covered in my own sick. And me without a camera!

The next few hours (six to be exact) were what I call the “Hourglass” phase of the flu. Once one end drained of its contents, I had to flip over and drain the other. There's an analogy for you (or “anal-logy,” if you prefer—damn, that's clever). I ended up calling in sick to work for two days and thinking about how much I want to scald my doctor for recommending the flu shot to me.

Now could SOMEBODY please explain the theoretical foundation behind the flu shot to me? Why are sane, intelligent people being fooled by this? This isn't really a method of prevention. In fact, it's the polar opposite of prevention. I have to line up like a drafted army private to get a very long, very sharp needle, which doesn't even contain heroin, just to ward off a disease that I end up getting anyway.

They inject the flu virus into you and tell you that one of the side effects of the shot is that you “may experience flu-like symptoms.” That's like buckling your seat belt and experiencing “crash-like injuries.” By this theory, I can get a shot for any damn disease, and if I end up contracting it, doctors just shrug.

I'm going to file this whole episode of life under “F,” not for “Flu,” but for “Fraud” and also “Fuck This.” I might as well get my cancer shot and chlamydia shot while I'm at it. The lesson of this rant is to never get a needle unless it stops a seizure and also that “the runs” are very aptly named.

On the plus side (there IS a plus side), being that sick is a lot like being a teen celebrity. Everyone waits on you and tells you you're hot, you're the center of attention, you don't eat and you end up passing out in your own vomit.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to barf.