Q & A: Preparing for Flu Season
By Ryan Burch, DO, family medicine physician, Froedtert Health Menomonee Falls Clinic

Q: When is flu season?
A: Flu season occurs during the cold half of the year in each hemisphere. In the United States, flu season is considered October through May, and it usually peaks in February.

Q: What can I do to prepare for the flu?
A: There are numerous ways to prepare for the flu. A simple suggestion is to use proper hygiene and wash your hands often. It’s also important to eat healthy, exercise, and take a daily multivitamin to keep your immune system healthy.

One of the best ways to prevent or prepare for the flu is to get vaccinated. It’s best to get vaccinated before flu season. Most often, the vaccine is given as a shot, but some people may receive the vaccine in nasal spray form instead. Your provider can tell you which vaccine is right for you.

Q: Who should get the flu vaccine?
A: All people six months of age and older are able to receive the vaccine. Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of severe influenza and their close contacts, including health care personnel and children younger than six months.

Q: How does the flu spread?
A: The flu can spread easily among children and adults. It spreads through the air in droplets when someone with the virus coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks. People can also become infected after touching a contaminated surface and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Q: What are symptoms of the flu?
A: The flu can have many symptoms, some of which include: fever (usually higher than 100°F), sore throat, headache, body and muscle aches, dry cough, runny nose, tiredness and weakness, diarrhea and vomiting, and possibly a body rash.

Q: Should I see my provider if I think I have the flu?
A: The best time to see your provider is to get vaccinated before flu season. However, you should call your provider if you’re experiencing any of the following:
- Fever over 100°F (37.7°C)
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or chest pain or pressure
- Cough with lots of colored sputum (mucus) or blood in the sputum
- Severe headache, face, neck or ear pain
- New rash
- Confusion, behavior change or seizure
- Severe or repeated vomiting or inability to keep fluids down

Q: How can the flu be treated?
A: Most people who come down with flu get better on their own. If symptoms are severe, your provider may prescribe medications called antivirals. Antivirals work by stopping the flu virus from reproducing in your body. This gives your body’s immune system a chance to fight the virus and may also prevent serious complications such as pneumonia.

Unless told otherwise by your doctor, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids, such as water or watered down juice, to prevent dehydration. A good rule is to drink enough so that you urinate your normal amount. It’s also encouraged that patients get plenty of rest, eat healthy, and take a multivitamin daily.

To learn more about the flu, talk to your primary care provider. Ryan Burch, DO, Froedtert Health Medical Group family medicine physician, sees patients at Menomonee Falls Clinic and is currently accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Burch, please call 262-250-5355.

Froedtert Health Medical Group will be offering flu shots at various locations throughout October and November. For a complete list of dates and times, visit froedterthealth.org, or ask your primary care provider for more information.

Find us on Facebook!

Froedtert Health recently launched a Facebook page. We hope you’ll “like” our page to get the latest Froedtert Health news, information on events and healthy lifestyle tips. We also invite you to share your experience with us on our wall.
Welcome
New Physician

Travis Hecker, MD, joined Froedtert Health Medical Group and began seeing patients at Froedtert Health West Bend Clinic on Sept. 17.

“Chronic pain is a multi-faceted disease process. As such, participation in physical therapy, behavioral medicine and medical therapies may form the basis of your management of the painful condition. In the majority of patients, chronic pain does not resolve. In conjunction with your primary care provider, I hope to provide timely, compassionate, and thorough care for chronic and cancer pain patients. My goal is, with your help, to find a safe balance between optimizing your function and managing your pain,” says Dr. Hecker.

Dr. Hecker received his Medical Degree from East Carolina University, Brody School of Medicine, Greenville, NC. He completed his internship and residency at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Hecker is fellowship trained in pain management from the University of Utah. His professional interests include malignant and non-malignant pain management, spinal cord stimulation, peripheral nerve stimulation, and intrathecal pump implantation.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Hecker, call West Bend Clinic at 262-365-6100.

HOOPS Clinic - Oct. 27
Comprehensive basketball clinic for 5th - 8th grade girls

HOOPS is a free community program by Froedtert Health Medical Group physicians, athletic trainers and physical therapists. Kristen Maskala, MD, Froedtert Health Medical Group orthopaedic surgeon and Marquette University women's basketball All-American, and Marquette alumni, will conduct skill sessions including: shooting, ball handling, defense, rebounding, one-on-one and post moves. Registration is required by Wednesday, Oct. 17. Registration forms are available at Froedtert Health Medical Group locations and at froedterthealth.org.

Saturday, Oct. 27
8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Hartford Union High School

Kristen Maskala, MD
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Froedtert HEALTH Clinics

1-800-DOCTORS
froedterthealth.org