INFLUENZA

“THE FLU”

Do you feel sick as a dog? Read on. You may have the flu………

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WHAT IS THE FLU?
- Respiratory infection caused by influenza virus
- Usually abrupt onset
- Lasts about 7 – 10 days

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?
- Chills & fever (can be high, up to 103° - 104° F)
- Headache & pain around eyes
- Muscle aches all over especially in the low back
- Severe fatigue
- Dry, hacking cough
- Congested runny nose & sneezing
- Sore throat

HOW DO I TREAT THE SYMPTOMS?
- The flu is a viral infection. Antibiotics only kill bacteria & will NOT cure the flu!
- Rest at home to recuperate & decrease spread to others
- Drink lots of fluids.
- Avoid cigarettes, caffeine, & alcohol.
- Symptom medications as needed:  
  * Pain relievers – acetaminophen (Tylenol®), ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), naproxen (Aleve®). NOTE: avoid aspirin. A rare but serious disorder called Reye’s Syndrome is associated with the use of aspirin during the flu, especially for people under 18.
  * Decongestants – for stuffy nose, sinuses, & ears
  * Antihistamines – for runny nose
  * Cough suppressants
- Prescription flu medicines: These may prevent or decrease flu symptoms & must be started right after exposure or symptoms start. They only decrease symptoms by about 1 day so are not often given to young healthy people.

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU HAVE:
- Coughed up blood or thick pus-like mucus
- Severe or persistent abdominal pain
- Difficulty breathing or bad chest pain
- Chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma or other lung diseases, heart or kidney diseases

PREVENT THE FLU!
- WASH HANDS FREQUENTLY DURING FLU SEASON especially when you are sick or contact someone else who is sick.
- Practice good health habits – adequate rest, proper nutrition, plenty of water, regular exercise – to keep your immune system & whole body healthy.
- Avoid crowds in flu season.
- Get a flu shot each year, especially if you:
  * Have chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, or immune dysfunction
  * Are over 55 years old
  * Work in health care or as a