

healthy YOU

a journal devoted to healthful living



The flu season

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE RECENT OUTBREAK of a new influenza virus called the 2009 H1N1 flu—formerly known as the swine flu—in the United States and other countries has many people wondering whether they are at risk and what they can do to protect their health.

On the following pages, you'll find some tips on how to protect your family this flu season.

BEAT THE BUG

There are many things that we can do to help prevent the spread of both the seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu viruses in our community. These guidelines will help reduce your risk of getting the flu, as well as spreading it.

Follow these tips to avoid getting the flu:

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water, or clean your hands

with alcohol-based sanitizer gel. Washing your hands is the best way to prevent the spread of any infection.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then throw the tissue away. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.

- Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes after touching common

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The flu season

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surfaces, such as doorknobs or dining tables.

KEEP IT CONTAINED

If you do get the flu:

■ Stay home. Do not go to work, school or public places—like shopping malls, grocery stores, and social gatherings.

■ Call your primary care physician. Your physician can determine if your symptoms require a visit to the doctor's office.

■ Do not go to the emergency room (ER) unless you or your child has the warning signs listed below. You could spread flu germs to ER patients and expose yourself to other illnesses.

■ Drink clear fluids like water, broth and sports drinks to avoid dehydration. Take over-the-counter pain relievers and flu medications, eat healthy, and get plenty of rest.

If your family members get the flu, keep them away from others as much as possible, especially from those at risk for



complications from the flu. If possible, have them use a separate bathroom, and clean it daily with disinfectant. Wash your hands after leaving their room.

GET VACCINATED

All these are effective prevention tips, but your best bet is to get vaccinated.

The seasonal flu vaccine is not expected to prevent the 2009 H1N1 flu. A vaccine for this flu is expected to be available in October. The Advisory Committee on

Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that certain people are high-priority for vaccination.

The seasonal flu vaccine. In general, anyone who wants to reduce his or her chances of getting seasonal flu can get a seasonal flu vaccine. However, the ACIP recommends that certain people get vaccinated each year.

These people are either at high risk of having serious seasonal flu-related complications or live

Know the signs

Colds and allergies often share similar symptoms with the flu. The flu symptoms listed below can typically be treated on an outpatient basis and do not require a trip to your doctor.

General flu symptoms

These symptoms can accompany both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu:

- Fever (over 100 degrees)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose

- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea and vomiting (in some cases)

Emergency warning signs

If you have these emergency warning signs, you need immediate medical attention.

- For adults: ■ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or

persistent vomiting

- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and a worse cough

- For children: ■ Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Irritability that makes the child not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and a worse cough



with or care for those at high risk for these complications. During flu seasons when vaccine supplies are limited or delayed, the ACIP recommends that the following priority groups get the seasonal flu vaccine:

- Children 6 months to 18 years old
- Pregnant women
- People 50 and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities

■ People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu. These include health care workers, people with household members at high risk for flu complications, people with household members younger than 6 months and out-of-home caregivers of children younger than 6 months.

The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.

There can be serious bacterial co-infections with the 2009 H1N1 flu, including streptococcus pneumonia. So the CDC recommends that people, especially those at high risk for serious flu complications, check with their physician about being vaccinated against pneumococcus when they get their flu vaccine.

The ACIP met on July 29 to

make recommendations for who should receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. The vaccine is recommended for the following people:

■ Pregnant women. They are at higher risk of complications and can potentially provide protection to their infants, who cannot be vaccinated.

■ Household members and caregivers of children younger than 6 months. Younger infants are at higher risk for flu-related complications, yet they can't be vaccinated. Vaccination of people in close contact with infants younger than 6 months old might help protect them by "cocooning" them from the virus.

■ Health care and emergency medical services personnel. Infections among health care workers have been reported, and this can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients. Also, if a large number of health care workers call in sick, this means a smaller workforce to care for patients.

■ Children 6 months to 18 years old. Cases of 2009 H1N1 flu have been seen in children who are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread.

■ Young adults 19 to 24. Many cases of 2009 H1N1 flu have been seen in healthy young adults. People of this age group often live, work and study in close proximity, and they are a relatively mobile population.

■ People 25 to 64 who have health conditions associated with a higher risk of medical complications from the flu. ❖

For the latest on the H1N1 flu, visit www.unitedregional.org and click on "Flu Updates."

Plan ahead: Your flu checklist

Be prepared—it's a good motto in any season, but especially for flu season. Keeping certain items on hand during the flu season can help ensure that you will not have to leave your home if you get the flu. Stock up on:

- Bottled water
- Canned or bottled fruit juices
- Canned meats, fish or poultry
- Canned soup, beans and vegetables
- Cereal
- Crackers
- Peanut butter
- Protein bars
- Tissues
- Toilet paper
- A two-week supply of prescription medications, over-the-counter pain relievers, and cold and flu medications



HEALTH NEWS UPDATE



Breakfast—read this before you skip it again

Breakfast—we know it's good for us. Yet, how many of us still skip it?

According to a survey by the International Food Information Council Foundation (IFIC), 92 percent of people say breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Even so, less than half (46 percent) of those surveyed reported eating breakfast daily.

What are we missing? According to the IFIC, eating a healthy breakfast can jump-start your daily intake of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. It may also help you: ■ Maintain a healthy weight. ■ Boost cardiovascular, digestive and bone health. ■ Increase energy and reduce emotional distress, anxiety and depression.

In children and adolescents, eating breakfast may improve their memory, test scores, school attendance, self-confidence and mood.

Making it happen. You'll reap the most breakfast benefits from eating whole-grain breads, cooked and ready-to-eat whole-grain cereals, low- and nonfat milk and milk products, fruits, and 100 percent fruit juices. However, eating anything for breakfast is better than nothing.

Quick-to-fix options include toasted waffles (preferably whole-grain) topped with peanut butter, instant oatmeal with milk and dried fruit, or a whole-wheat pita stuffed with sliced hard-cooked eggs. ❖

EVERY LITTLE THING



Travel to an unfamiliar city doesn't have to interrupt your fitness routine. Ask the hotel staff about good places to walk or run; some hotels offer **MAPS** of nearby walking or jogging routes.

—American Heart Association

Bumped your head? **CONCUSSIONS** can occur even without the loss of consciousness. You should see a health care provider immediately if you have a headache; feel nauseous, dizzy or groggy; or have double or fuzzy vision.

—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Babies born weighing less than 5 pounds 8 ounces are considered to have a **LOW BIRTH WEIGHT**. These babies are at higher risk of health problems than babies weighing more. Women who have early and regular prenatal care may reduce the risk of having a low-birth-weight baby.

—March of Dimes

Can kids have clogged arteries?

The obesity epidemic is putting kids at risk for some very grown-up problems.

According to research reported by the American Heart Association (AHA), some children and teens have plaque buildup in their neck arteries at levels more often found in middle-aged adults. Children who are obese and have high triglyceride levels are most likely to have arteries with premature plaque accumulation.

Plaque buildup in the neck arteries is generally a sign of plaque buildup elsewhere in the body, including in the heart's arteries, notes the AHA. And it means those children are at risk for heart attack and stroke when they are adults.

Parents can be the first line of defense in protecting their children's future health.

Here are a few ideas from the AHA:

■ Be a healthy role model. Your kids are more likely to be physically active



and eat healthy foods if you do too.

■ Keep screen time (including TV, video game and computer) to a minimum. This frees up time for kids to get out and get moving.

■ Do things together. Family activities like walking, cycling or gardening help everyone in the family stay fit.

Finally, ask your child's doctor for help if you are concerned about your child's weight or diet. ❖



Advances in surgery mean faster recovery

Kevin Thomas, MD, center, performs single-incision gallbladder removal.

LAPAROSCOPIC procedures performed through a single incision are a significant advancement in the world of surgery.

While laparoscopy traditionally offers better patient outcomes than the open approach—including less pain and better cosmetic appearance—single-incision laparoscopic procedures have the potential to greatly extend these benefits.

CASE-IN-POINT

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) is one of the most common abdominal procedures that general surgeons perform. It's now possible to perform this surgery through only one small incision.

In traditional cholecystectomy, four incisions are made in the abdomen: one by the navel for the camera, one just under the ribcage near the center and two more on

the right side.

In single-incision cholecystectomy, the camera and two instruments are passed through a single incision that curves around the navel.

Sutures replace the usual additional incisions needed for instruments. At the end of the operation, the patient has a single incision scar, which is hidden in the lines of the navel.

Kevin Thomas, MD, general surgeon, performed the first single-incision laparoscopic cholecystectomy at United Regional in March 2009.

“In single-incision surgery, as well as using the standard laparoscopic equipment, we use our experience in advanced laparoscopic surgery, laparoscopic suturing techniques and angled instruments to allow us to perform the same operation that usually takes four or more small incisions,” Dr. Thomas says.

THE PAYOFF: BETTER RECOVERY

A single-incision procedure, which on average takes less than an hour to complete, means a lower risk of infection during recovery because there is only one scar.

For the same reason, the need for pain medication is lessened, and in most cases, patients are able to resume their normal activities more quickly.

A single-incision procedure is not the best option for every patient. For some patients, a standard surgery will be required. Patients should discuss all surgical options with their physician.

The new types of less-invasive surgeries are likely to become the standard of care for operations on the gallbladder, appendix, kidneys, stomach and other organs in the abdominal area.

To make an appointment with a surgeon who specializes in minimally invasive procedures, please call **940-764-8570**. ❖

HEALTH CLASS UPDATE



To register for any course, contact "Call-A-Nurse" at 940-764-8570.

COMMUNITY SEMINARS

Is joint or back pain interfering with your daily activities? Come learn about the latest treatment options.

Walk Away from Joint Pain: Advanced Surgical Techniques in Joint Replacement

Presenting physicians: Michael Sheen, MD, and Joshua Schacter, DO
Wednesday, Nov. 4
11:30 a.m.: Registration and light lunch
Noon: Presentation and Q&A
Holiday Inn at 100 Central Freeway

Oh, My Aching Back: Advanced Surgical Solutions for Back Pain

Presenting physicians: John Reeves, MD, and Langham Gleason, MD
Wednesday, Nov. 11
■ 6 p.m.: Registration and refreshments
■ 6:30 p.m.: Presentation and Q&A
Holiday Inn at 100 Central Freeway



FOR YOUR HEALTH

Participants will receive class locations when they register for the following classes.

Becoming Smoke-Free

Learn strategies necessary to stop smoking in this four-session course taught by registered respiratory therapists. Attendees will receive free nicotine replacement therapy during the course.
Tuesday, Nov. 10, through Thursday, Nov. 19, 6 to 8 p.m.
\$25 per person

Diabetes Support Group

Monday, Nov. 23, 6:30 p.m.

Breathsavers

Pulmonary Support Group

This group is for adults with pulmonary diseases (COPD, asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis) and teaches self-care skills for a more active life.
Tuesday, Nov. 10, 6 p.m.

Advanced Cardiac Life Support for Health Care Providers

Basic Arrhythmia course is a prerequisite. Provides 14 CNE contact hours.
Thursday, Nov. 12, and Friday, Nov. 13
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Pediatric Advanced Life Support for Health Care Providers

Provides 12.25 CNE contact hours.
Tuesday, Nov. 17, and Wednesday, Nov. 18, 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CHILDBIRTH AND PARENTING

Prepared Childbirth

This course covers preparing for the delivery, pain management, newborn care and safety, and emotional changes during pregnancy.

Tuesdays, Nov. 3 to Dec. 1, 7 to 9 p.m.
\$30 per couple

Prepared Childbirth—Condensed Course

This course covers as the above course but in a one-day format.

Saturdays, Nov. 7 or Dec. 5,
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
\$30 per couple

Basics of Breastfeeding

This course explores the benefits of breastfeeding and teaches the proper feeding techniques.

Thursday, Nov. 5, or Tuesday, Dec. 8
7 to 9 p.m.
\$20 per couple.

Infant/Child CPR

Participants will receive an inflatable learning manikin along with an instructional DVD and other course materials.

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 7 to 9 p.m.
\$35 per person

Special Siblings

This course helps future big brothers or big sisters understand their feelings regarding the birth of a new sibling.

Saturday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m. to noon
\$10 per child

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Fun and philanthropy: From left, Michael Sheen, MD; Robert Newman; John Reeves, MD; and Kyle King, MD, comprised one of 52 teams participating in this year's United Regional Foundation Golf Classic.

2009 Golf Classic: Thanks for chipping in!

This year's United Regional Foundation Golf Classic on Sept. 14 netted just under \$43,000 in support of a new orthopedic and neurological surgical suite in the Bridwell Tower. United Regional Foundation greatly appreciates the support of our generous sponsors:

CHAMPION

Michael Sheen, MD

EAGLE

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Meridian Revenue Solutions

Legacy Circle

Our *Legacy Circle* is comprised of those whose estate plans include United Regional Foundation, Children's Miracle Network at United Regional, or Rathgeber Hospitality House.

Legacy Circle — for those whose generosity and foresight will make an enduring and positive difference in the lives of others.

1600 Eleventh Street
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301
Phone: 940-764-8205
E-mail: foundation@urhcs.org



To support excellence in health care,
go to www.unitedregional.org and click on "Donate."

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Give while you shop

It's easy and fun! Just head over to www.shoppingformiracles.org and click on the retail store where you wish to shop. Children's Miracle Network at United Regional will receive a contribution based on the amount of your purchase. ❖

Kohl's Kids' Safety Event a success

Children's Miracle Network, in partnership with Kohl's Department Store, hosted a Kids' Safety Event on Saturday, Sept. 19. The Kids' Injury Prevention Team from United Regional inspected more than 50 vehicles, replaced 19 convertible car seats and provided 12 booster seats as well as 20 bicycle helmets. A special thanks to D.A.R.E., Kohl's A-Team, Nissan of Wichita Falls, Wichita Falls Fire Department and TxDot volunteers, who helped make the event a success. ❖

We've moved!

Offices of the United Regional Foundation and Children's Miracle Network are now located at 1600 Grace St. However, our mailing address (1600 13th St., Wichita Falls, TX 76301) as well as e-mail, phone and fax information all remain the same. ❖

UNITED REGIONAL
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
1600 11th St.
Wichita Falls, TX 76301

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Save the date!

DON'T MISS the 2010 Heart of a Woman Brunch on Saturday, February 13, at the Wichita Falls Multi-Purpose Events Center (MPEC). The purpose of this event is to raise women's awareness of their risks for heart disease, to provide health and wellness information, and to raise funds for programs and services at United Regional's Cardiac Institute.

Attendees will receive a full wellness panel screening, VIP parking, brunch and special gifts, as well as hear stories from the heart.

Doors will open at 8 a.m. for screenings for brunch attendees, the buffet will open at 8:30 a.m. and the program will begin at 9:30 a.m. at MPEC. To attend or for additional information, contact Nancy Brown at 940-764-8283 or nbrown@urhcs.org. ❖

heart of a woman


Make a promise

EARLY DETECTION OF BREAST CANCER TRULY MATTERS

IT'S NATIONAL Breast Health Awareness Month, and here's a pledge that's well worth making: "I'll make an appointment to have a mammogram."

When it comes to breast cancer, early detection offers women the best chance of surviving the disease, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS).

There are some things that increase your risk for breast cancer, such as your age or having close relatives with the disease. But at the same time, most women who get breast cancer don't have any

risk factors at all.

That's why talking with your doctor is so important—you can discuss your personal risk and decide what's best for you.

If you are over 40, talk to your doctor about beginning regular mammograms. If you're overdue for one, schedule it as soon as possible.

United Regional's Women's Imaging Center provides digital mammography in the Bridwell Tower. Schedule your mammogram today by calling 940-764-5050. ❖