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## INFLUENZA

Influenza (the flu) is a viral infection that occurs mostly in the winter months, and can include any or all of the following symptoms:

Fever	Chills	Loss of appetite
Body aches	Sore throat	Runny nose or congestion
Cough	Vomiting	Diarrhea

The flu can be diagnosed by a rapid flu test, or also by history and physical exam.

### How is the flu treated?

- There is no single medicine that will cure the flu. However, your doctor MAY prescribe a medicine called Tamiflu, which if started in the first 1-2 days of symptoms, can decrease the severity and duration of the illness a little. It will not cure all the symptoms of the flu.
- Rest. Your child may return to school or daycare only after the fever has been gone for 24 hours.
- Encourage liquids to help prevent dehydration.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin / Advil) can be used if needed for fever or pains as directed by your doctor. Do NOT give aspirin to your child.
- Use a cough or cold medicine ONLY IF directed by your doctor. Most of these medications are not effective and can be dangerous to infants and young children.
- To help prevent the spread of flu, have all family members wash their hands frequently and cover mouth / nose while sneezing or coughing. Avoid sharing drinking glasses or utensils.
- Talk to your doctor about the flu vaccine in the fall, before flu season.

### Call our office if:

- Your child has any difficulty breathing.
- You are concerned your child is getting dehydrated (for example, dry lips or mouth, no tears when crying, less urine output).
- Your child appears very tired and weak, and is not playful or interactive with you.
- Your child seems to be in any pain (for example, earache, headache, neck or chest pains).
- Your child is not improving after 4-5 days of illness, or is still running a fever.

**For any urgent or emergent medical concerns, please call 911 or go immediately to the nearest emergency department.**