



Special points of interest:

What Would You Like to See in the Newsletter?

- Disease Update Please use the attached sheet to ask questions or
- New Residents make comments. Turn it into the receptionist
- Medication Refills when you check out



OCTOBER, 2005

Carolyn

Abrahamson

RACINE FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC & RESIDENCY PROGRAM 262/687-5600

The Practice Pipeline

1320 Wisconsin Ave., Racine, WI 53403

Patient Communication Newsletter



DISEASE UPDATE

What is Influenza?

Influenza is a highly contagious viral illness marked by fevers, muscle aches, cough, headache, and fatigue. The infection is generally self-limited and lasts only two to five days on average, although it can persist for more than a week. Some patients may develop complications of the flu that last longer and require special treatment.

What causes influenza?

Influenza is caused by the influenza A or B virus. Outbreaks of influenza occur worldwide, mainly during the winter season.

What are the symptoms of influenza?

Influenza usually begins abruptly with the onset of fever, headache, muscle aches, and fatigue; cough and sore throat may also be present. Symptoms usually improve over two to five days, although the illness may last for a week or more. Occasionally, weakness and fatigue may persist for several weeks.

Can influenza be prevented?

Influenza Vaccine—is available and effective in reducing a person’s chance of contracting the flu. Vaccination is usually recommended in the early fall, but in the last several years there have been significant shortages of vaccine which led to recommendations to delay vaccination until later in the fall.

Because the influenza virus changes (or “mutates”) slightly from year to year, a new vaccine must be produced and administered prior to each flu season. Each year’s vaccine is based on the previous year’s flu virus and virus strains known to be circulating in other parts of the world. The vaccine’s effectiveness for the current year’s flu, therefore, depends upon how well scientists are able to predict which strains will cause infection in a given year.

Patients receiving the vaccine make antibodies (proteins) which destroy the virus after the person is exposed; it generally takes about two weeks for the body to make these antibodies. If the circulating virus and the strains used for the vaccine match closely, the vaccine may protect 50 to 80% of those receiving the vaccine from getting the flu.

Where to get more information:

Your doctor is the best resource for finding out important information related to your particular case. Not all patients with influenza are alike, and it is important that your situation is evaluated by someone who knows you as a whole person. (over)

Influenza (Continued)

This information will be updated as needed every four months on our web site (<http://www.uptodate.com>). Additional topics as well as selected discussions written for healthcare professionals are also available for those who would like more detailed information.

A number of other sites on the internet have information about influenza. Information provided by the National Institutes of Health, national medical societies and some other well-established organizations are often reliable sources of information, although the frequency with which they are updated is variable.

- National Library of Medicine

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>

-National Coalition for Adult Immunization

(<http://www.nfid.org/ncai>)

4733 Bethesda Ave., Suite 750

Bethesda, MD 20817-5228

Tel: (301) 656-0003 Fax: (301) 907-0878

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

(<http://www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/mmwr.html>)

1600 Clifton Road

Atlanta, GA 30333

(Tel: (404) 639-3534 Toll Free: (800) 311-3435)

By Dr. Jesse DeGroat, Medical Director

You can get your flu shot during one of your office visits or you can call 262/687-5600 to schedule an appointment with the nurse to receive your shot.

New Resident Profile

Dr. Emelide Mont-Louis was born in Port au Prince, Haiti. She is an undergraduate of Emmanuel College in Boston, Massachusetts. She graduated from Spartan Health Sciences University in St. Lucia in August, 2003. Her special interests in family medicine are Women and Infants and rural medicine in 3rd world countries.

Dr. Mont-Louis speaks French and Haitian. Her personal interests are sewing, cooking, listening to music, traveling and church activities.

Dr. Shivendra Bahadur is an undergraduate from the University of Toronto, Toronto Canada. He received his medical degree from Ross University, Dominica in November, 2003.

Dr. Bahadur speaks French, Hindi and Punjabi. His personal interests are playing tennis, squash, badminton, and spending time with friends and family. He also is interested in computers and stamp and coin collection.

HOW DO I REFILL MY MEDICATION?

Many patients wonder about the best way to get their medications refilled.

There is an easy way to do this. You just call your pharmacy and request a refill. If your medication needs permission for additional refills—the pharmacy will contact us to get the okay to refill the medication. You should not call the clinic to request refills. It is easier for us to process the request from the pharmacy because they have all of the information that we need to approve the refill. Once we get the information from the pharmacy, the doctor looks at your chart and decides if it is all right to refill your medication. If they do not okay the refill, the doctor or the nurse will call you to tell you why the doctor did not okay your refill. Usually, the reason for not refilling medication is that you need to come in for an appointment so the doctor can see how you are doing. If you need sample medications from our office, you should call our main number **(262-687-5600)** and leave a message for the nurse. Remember at each office visit with your doctor to get any refills on medication—this will save time for you!

Connie Kinnee, Clinic Administrator