



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## It's Flu Season: How to Stay Well

**PENSACOLA, Fla. (Oct. 8, 2018)** – Baptist Health Care encourages effective preventive measures to fight the flu. Influenza causes more than 200,000 people in the U.S. to be hospitalized every year, and about 36,000 die from flu-related causes. The expert internal medicine and family medicine physicians of Baptist Medical Group share these helpful tips on how to avoid the flu this season.

### **Get a Flu Shot**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people 6 months of age and older be vaccinated. Even if one strain of the flu virus has mutated from the strain used in the vaccine, the flu vaccine will still offer protection and could reduce the severity of flu symptoms. Flu shots for individuals ages 9 and older are available at Baptist Medical Group practices.

### **Cover Your Cough**

Practice good manners and cover your cough or sneeze. Coughing and sneezing can project germs from three to 12 feet on surfaces or persons around you. When you feel the need to cough or sneeze, simply cover your cough or sneeze by using your elbow or sleeve.

### **Wash Your Hands**

Germs are everywhere, and they can live on surfaces for up to 48 hours or more. Take the time to properly wash your hands to prevent spreading an infection. Wash your hands with warm water, first rinsing hands with water and then applying antibacterial soap. Be sure to lather hands, wrists, fingers and scrub under fingernails. Clean your hands for 20 seconds before rinsing them with clean water. Dry them completely with a clean towel.

### **Stay Home When Sick**

If you have fever, which is considered a temperature of anything above 100.4 degrees, stay home for at least 24 hours until after the fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medications. Staying home decreases the risk of spreading the infection.

### **Make Healthy Choices**

Prepare your body to fight off common colds or the flu. Keep your immune system strong by eating healthy food, staying active and obtaining plenty of rest. Talk to your doctor about other ways to boost immunity.

### **Seek Care**

Seek care if you or your loved one starts to feel ill. If you or your family member has a fever greater than 100, muscle aches, chills and extreme fatigue, consider making an appointment with a Baptist Medical Group physician or visit Baptist Urgent Care on Nine Mile Road or Airport Boulevard in Pensacola or on Navarre Parkway in Navarre.

**For more information about the flu virus or to schedule an appointment, call 850.437.8600 or visit [BaptistMedicalGroup.org](http://BaptistMedicalGroup.org) and click EasySchedule.**

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For more information about this press release or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathy Bowers at 850.791.5254 or [BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org](mailto:BHCMediaRelations@bhcpns.org).

*About Baptist Health Care*

*Baptist Health Care is a community-owned, not-for-profit health care organization committed to improving the quality of life for people and communities in Northwest Florida and South Alabama. The organization is a proud member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. A 2003 Malcolm Baldrige recipient, Baptist continuously strives to be a national leader in quality and service. Baptist Health Care includes three hospitals, four medical parks, Andrews Institute for Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine, Lakeview Center, Baptist Medical Group and Baptist Heart & Vascular Institute. With more than 6,500 employees and employed physicians, Baptist Health Care is the largest non-governmental employer in Northwest Florida. For more information, please visit [www.eBaptistHealthCare.org](http://www.eBaptistHealthCare.org).*

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