Flu Information

The flu vaccine is FREE to Baylor’s BCBS/CVS/caremark members at:

- Your doctor’s office
- Retail pharmacies
  - Examples: CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Target, and other participating pharmacies. You are encouraged to contact your pharmacy of choice to confirm the availability of the vaccine.
  - The minimum age to get a flu shot without a prescription is seven (7). Pharmacists will administer the vaccination to children younger than seven; however, they must have a prescription, whereas no prescription is required for patients seven and older.
- Covered flu vaccines include: Injectable Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (Trivalent); Intranasal Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (FluMist); Intradermal Seasonal Influenza Vaccine; Injectable Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (Quadrivalent); and, Injectable Seasonal Influenza Vaccine – High dose – Fluzone.

The CDC Says “Take 3” Actions to Fight the Flu

_CDC urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (the flu):

1. Take time to get a flu vaccine.

   - CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
   - While there are many different flu viruses, a flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research suggests will be most common.
   - Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors’ visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths.
   - Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as they are available.
   - Vaccination of high risks persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.
• Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to them.
• Children younger than 6 are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for infants should be vaccinated instead.

2

**Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.**

• Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
• While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
• If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
• Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based hand rub sanitizer
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
• Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

3

**Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.**

• If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can be used to treat your illness.
• Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) and are not available over-the-counter.
• Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For people with high risk factors, treatment with an antiviral drug can mean the difference between having a milder illness versus a very serious illness that could result in a hospital stay.
• Studies show that flu antiviral drugs work best for treatment when they are started within 2 days of getting sick, but starting them later can still be helpful, especially if the sick person has a high risk condition or is very sick from the flu. Follow your doctor’s instructions for taking this drug.
• Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.