

Choose Wisely... Choose HEALTH!

A newsletter brought to you by OSF Saint Francis Medical Center



“Because the flu vaccine is made from flu viruses that have been inactivated or killed, it cannot cause the flu or flu symptoms.”

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For more information about Choose HEALTH! call (309) 282-1624. Teaching handouts from OSF Saint Francis Medical Center are not medical advice nor are they to be used in place of proper medical care. If you have any questions or concerns about your health or well-being, please talk with your doctor or healthcare provider who knows you best.

Flu Shots - An Effective Way to Prevent Illness & Economic Loss

By Doug Rasmussen

Contracting the flu (from the influenza virus) is not merely an inconvenience; it can lead to permanent disability, personal economic loss, organization economic loss and in some cases even death. You are probably familiar with the series of symptoms that go along with this common “bug”, beginning with a general bad feeling that progresses to aches, weakness, chills, fever, and lung congestion. The symptoms can be so severe that a person with the flu cannot work, provide care for their family and may need medical care, including hospitalization. Coming down with the flu can be dangerous and expensive.

Costs of the Flu

For employers, arranging for company sponsored or facilitated flu shots is a wise decision. Close contact in offices and manufacturing sites can be an easy breeding ground for the spread of the flu. This can and does lead to large numbers of employees being absent for days or longer if the effects are severe. Even an employee with minor symptoms should probably remain at home due to the potential to expose others. Few employers can easily afford having a large number of employees away from work. Absenteeism is not the only cost of a widespread flu outbreak at work. Getting work done with fewer employees can lead to expensive overtime, reduced productivity and straining of supervisory responsibilities. There

are also safety issues associated with worker fatigue, taking physical shortcuts to get a job done and trying to perform heavy physical tasks alone when it would be best to get assistance.

Although costs and savings may vary, large employers who offer flu shots to their employees report a \$3.00 - \$7.00 return for every dollar spent on a flu shot clinic.

How the Flu Shot Works

Each year medical experts work hard to identify the different types of flu that are most likely to be prevalent for that year. Then companies go to work to develop vaccines that provide immunization. The vaccine is highly effective in preventing the flu for those receiving it by preparing the person’s body to fight the virus before it overpowers the immune system.

Common Myths

Each year, you might find yourself debating whether or not you should get a flu shot. Let us clarify a few myths that may have left you gambling with your health in years past:

- ✓ **Does the flu vaccine actually cause the flu?** No. Because the vaccine is made from flu viruses that have been inactivated or killed it cannot cause the flu or flu symptoms. It is however, possible to contract a different strain of flu or to come down with other viruses not associated with

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influenza. Some people who get the shots may still come down with the flu for which they were vaccinated. However, the severity and likelihood of hospitalization is greatly reduced.

- ✓ **Is it necessary to get a flu shot each year?** Yes. Because there are so many strains of influenza virus, one vaccination does not protect from strains

that may be common the next year. That is why yearly vaccinations are important in reducing the chance of coming down with the flu. Getting yearly shots also helps the body become resistance to a wide variety of flu strains over time.

Where Do I Get Flu Shots?

October and November are the best times to get vaccinated, however the flu season can actually last into April. Some pharmacies and stores

offer free flu clinics, your doctor can provide the shot, or in many cases, employers offer these at the workplace. Look in your local newspaper for pharmacies or stores offering free flu shots; or contact your family physician.

Employers who are looking for onsite flu clinics can contact their healthcare provider or provider of Occupational Medicine services.

August is Cataract Awareness Month- By Kathy Riley, MS, RN

Did you know that by the age of 80, over half of Americans will have a cataract or cataract surgery? A cataract is a slow clouding of the lens in the eye that affects how we see. Although cataracts are most often seen in older people, they can occur at anytime.

Types of Cataracts

Not all cataracts are created equal. There are many different types, including:

- ✓ Age related cataracts: occur as we get older.
- ✓ Secondary cataracts: caused by another situation like a certain disease (Diabetes), or medication (steroid or diuretic use).
- ✓ Traumatic cataracts: due to a recent or past eye injury
- ✓ Congenital: formed before or soon after birth
- ✓ Radiation: due to exposure to some types of radiation

Signs & Symptoms

It's not always obvious when cataracts start to develop. Be aware of the signs and symptoms, including:

- ✓ Cloudy or blurred vision
- ✓ Halo around lights
- ✓ Poor night vision
- ✓ Trouble with glare such as with headlights, lamps or sunlight that seems too bright
- ✓ Colors in your vision seem to be fading or having a brown or yellow tint
- ✓ Frequent prescription changes
- ✓ Double vision or multiple images in one eye

Prevention & Treatment

If you have any trouble with your

eyes or vision, never postpone seeing an eye doctor. In fact, regular eye exams are an important way to protect your vision. Early symptoms of a cataract can often be helped with a new eyeglass prescription, anti-glare glasses, brighter lights, or a magnifying glass. As the symptoms progress and daily activities (driving, etc) are hampered, surgery is the only effective treatment. Other ways to prevent cataracts include:

- ✓ Wearing sunglasses and wide brimmed hats to block UV sunrays from reaching your eyes
- ✓ Quitting smoking
- ✓ Eating a good diet rich in green leafy vegetables, fruits and other foods high in antioxidants
- ✓ Scheduling and keeping routine eye exams

References:
www.nei.nih.gov,
www.webmd.com



Normal vision

Vision affected by cataracts

Exergaming: Bringing out the “kid” in you - By Stacey Akins, Exercise Specialist

According to the CDC, 13% of Illinois high school students were obese in 2007. 56% of Illinois high school students did not meet the recommended levels of physical activity, 25% did not attend physical education classes, and 53% did not attend classes on a daily basis. Also, 24% of these students played video/computer games for 3 or more hours per day. Adults may get just as much “screen time” in front of computers and T.V. What is the solution to this growing epidemic? In the past, youth-related physical fitness was centered on team sports and persuading children to be more athletic in nature.

Reports suggest that the majority of youth are not athletic and do not enjoy the typical team sport activities. The number one reason why children stop playing sports is because it stops being fun. Team sports may be great for some but what will work for the others?

What is Exergaming?

Video games and text messaging may have led us to a generation of strong thumbs and large waist lines, but exergaming may be changing this trend for the better. Exergaming is participating in technology-driven physical activities which involve the user in action or role play in the form of a game. It creates a virtual reality experience requiring participants to use their body to participate in the gaming activity. Exergaming is aligned with our culture and simply stated “is

what kids do”. An exergaming environment not only provides participants with the component of physical activity, but it also offers a social environment in which all generations seem to be attracted. The energy and excitement that is generated in this type of environment is similar to that of a group exercise class. Let us keep in mind that although youth is the target for this new era of exercise, people of all ages can participate in this exciting new side of physical activity.

Coming Soon to the RiverPlex!

The RiverPlex Recreation and Wellness Center recognizes the need for family-friendly wellness programming. In response to this need, we will be opening an interactive exergaming studio that will focus on giving people of all ages an opportunity to participate in regular physical activity in a safe, fun and exciting setting. Using your body as the controller, you will interact with computer software while competing against the computer itself, a peer, or a group of participants. The target date for the opening of this studio is September of 2008. Check out the RiverPlex website at www.riverplex.org to watch for further announcements.

The Evolution

This industry has evolved over the past 25 years and is headed into the mainstream. In 1998, Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) was released. It was highly effective, exercise-wise, and very cost effective. In 2006, Nintendo released the Wii and in 2007, released the Wii Fit, which utilizes a balance board. The latest evolution of exergaming tracks full body movement in 3 dimensions, and provides accurate measurements



of reaction time, acceleration and deceleration quickness, and movement speed and power.

These systems are being used in rehabilitation and sports training facilities and are starting to make their way to fitness centers. There are numerous exergaming systems and products on the market today. All you need to do is find one that is right for you. Examples of some exergaming devices include: PCGamer Bike, NeoRacer, DDR, EyeToy, some Wii games, Gamercize, and Cybex TRAZER.

Benefits of Exergaming

Several studies have found that exergaming options got participants' heart rates higher than some traditional exercises such as jumping rope. It has also been shown that reluctant exercisers are more willing to participate in this type of “gaming” activity. Other people don't exercise because they feel it takes away from family time. Exergaming is a fun way to spend time with your family, without knowing that you are exercising. It's time to start thinking outside the box and enjoy new avenues of exercise; the possibilities are endless.

Managing Your Heart Health, Fall Series 2008

A community education series brought to you by OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital and OSF Saint Francis Wellness Services at the RiverPlex. All programs will take place at the RiverPlex Recreation & Wellness Center, main floor classroom. To register, please call 1-888-627-5673.



September 18 "Heart Disease and Nutrition: Eating Smart for a Healthy Heart"

9:00 - 9:45 a.m.	"Heart Disease" by Sudhir Mungee MD. OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital
9:45 - 10:45 a.m.	"Eat Well for a Healthy Heart" by Jenni Newton, RD, LDN, Phase II Cardiac Rehabilitation Dietitian, OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital
10:45 - 11:45 a.m.	"Buying and Preparing Heart Healthy Food at Home" by Ashley Simper, MS, RD, LDN Community/Outpatient Dietitian, OSF Saint Francis Medical Center
11:45 - 12:45 p.m.	Lunch & Displays - Healthy lunch provided for \$5.00.
12:45p-1:45pm	"Eat Smart While Dining Out" by Jenny Reay, RD, LDN, Wellness Dietitian, OSF Saint Francis Medical Center
1:45 - 2:00 p.m.	"Evaluations and Wrap-up"

October 9 "Healthcare Decisions: Who Decides?"

6:30-7:30 p.m.	What is Palliative Care? Where did it come from and where is it going? What can you do to make sure your healthcare wishes will be followed, now and in the future? Topics will include Healthcare Power of Attorney, Living Wills, and the Surrogate Act. Learn more than what forms are needed; learn the discussions that should take place to make sure your wishes are known and followed. Presented by Christopher Martin, MD, Medical Director Palliative Care Service, and Tammy Sarmiento ACNP-BC Palliative Care Advanced Practice Nurse, OSF Saint Francis Medical Center. <i>This session is free of charge!</i>
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November 13 "Diabetes and the Heart Connection"

6:30-7:30 p.m.	Diabetes and the Heart Connection. People with diabetes are twice as likely to get heart disease. Heart attacks occur at an earlier age in people with diabetes. Heart attacks are more likely to cause premature death in people with diabetes. Heart disease deaths are decreasing in all groups except persons with diabetes, where they are actually increasing. Learn why these two diseases go hand-in-hand and how you can break the chain that binds them. Presented by Donald B McElroy, MD, OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital. <i>This session is free of charge!</i>
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Salsa Salad Bowl

Ingredients:

1 can black beans, drained and rinsed	¼ cup lime juice
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, chopped	1 Tbsp olive oil
4 oz mozzarella cheese, shredded or cut into ¼ inch cubes	Dash cayenne pepper or hot sauce, to taste
1 medium green bell pepper, chopped	Dash salt (optional)
½ cup red onion, chopped	
1/3 cup cilantro leaves, chopped	

Directions:

Combine oil, lime juice, cayenne pepper/hot sauce and set aside. Combine all other ingredients, mix well. Add oil mixture to coat evenly and serve. Serves 4. **Nutrition Facts:** Makes 4 Servings. **Per serving:** 207 calories, 8g fat, 3g saturated fat, 16mg cholesterol, 5g fiber, 300mg sodium, 13g protein