

# TCC Advice Seasonal Newsletter

## FALL TO WINTER HEALTH TIPS FOR YOUR FAMILY!

### Flu season is coming: What you need to know

#### What is the Influenza (flu)?

- Flu is a respiratory infection caused by a virus.
- Flu can infect the nose, throat and sometimes the lungs.
- Complications from the flu can be pneumonia, bronchitis, dehydration, sinus infections, and ear infections. Some children require hospitalization or even die from the flu.
- Children younger than 5, children with asthma or other chronic health problems are at higher risk of complications from flu.
- Flu can cause fever, cough, muscle aches, fatigue, headache and runny or stuffy nose.

#### When are people contagious?

- People with flu are most contagious in the first 3-7 days of their illness.
- It usually takes 2-4 days to develop flu symptoms after being exposed.

#### How does it spread?

- Flu virus is spread by tiny droplets when someone coughs or sneezes.
- When an infected person coughs or sneezes, it can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby.
- Or, less often, it can be transmitted when an infected person coughs or sneezes into their hands and then touches a door or faucet, etc. and then spreads when other people touch the flu-contaminated surface and then touch their mouth, nose or eyes.

#### What are the best ways to prevent flu

- **Flu vaccination** is the best prevention against the flu and flu-related complications.
- The CDC recommends flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and up every flu season.
- It takes about 2 weeks after receiving the vaccine for protection to develop.
- Good handwashing is also important to prevent the spread of flu and other illnesses.
- Teach kids to cough and sneeze into the crook of the elbow (instead of their hands) so germs don't go all over the hands and spread to everything they touch. This is good practice for adults, too.
- When out shopping, wipe down shopping carts with disinfectant wipes AND wash everyone's hands as soon as you get home.

#### What should you do if you think your child has *the flu*?

Call your pediatrician and talk to an advice nurse. We can help you with how to care for your child at home and determine if she or he needs to be seen.

### Head Banger: Does your kiddo have a Concussion?

Any blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the **brain to shake** can cause a concussion. Concussions in kids are common—and only half of concussions are sports related. A concussion can occur even when a person is not "knocked out." Some symptoms may appear right after the injury, such as headache, dizziness, and nausea, but some symptoms may not be obvious.

**Call and speak to an Advice Nurse** if your child has a head injury. If a concussion is suspected, an appointment will be made, and you will be given guidelines for what activities are okay and not okay until she/he is seen by the doctor. Keep your child out of sports and PE until your appointment and limit activities that make symptoms worse.

#### **CALL IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS OCCUR:**

- Significantly worsening headache
- Excessive drowsiness or inability to be awakened
- Repetitive vomiting
- Confusion
- Unusual behavior changes
- Weakness/numbness in arms/legs, or seizures

### Avoiding Injuries from Falls:

According to the CDC, falls are the leading cause of non-fatal child injuries. Many of these falls are preventable.

- Children commonly fall from windows and structures, playground equipment and bunk beds.
- According to Safe Kids Worldwide, ( <https://www.safekids.org/fall-prevention> ), there are 3300 injuries from falls from windows yearly in the United States in children younger than age 5, and 38% of fall related injuries are in children age 4 and under.
- Children are twice as likely to sustain fall-related injuries at home than in a childcare facility.
- Window screens are not an effective barrier against falls and can easily be pushed outward by a toddler or young child.
- Install window guards and stops that open no more than 4 inches and can be removed by an adult in an emergency.
- Keep windows closed and locked when not in use.
- Keep children from climbing near windows, and move chairs, cribs and furniture away from windows
- Play on soft surfaces at playgrounds with shock absorbing surfaces such as rubber, synthetic turf, sand, pea gravel, wood chips or mulch.
- Use approved safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs, attached to the wall if possible.
- Local Resources/Products for window safety:
- Safety Center at Randall Childrens Hospital at Legacy Emanuel. <https://www.legacyhealth.org/health-services-and-information/health-services/for-children-a-z/safety-programs/window-safety.aspx>