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5 Things to Know About the Flu and Flu Vaccine

The National Institutes of Health estimates the annual economic burden for the flu at \$87 billion. That's right. *Billion*. Hospitalizations, outpatient visits, and millions of lost days of work. Not to mention the fact that the flu will knock you on your back and make you feel really crummy for one to two weeks. So, what are you doing to prep yourself and your employees for the upcoming flu season? Read on for five things to know:

1. **It's seasonal.** Flu season usually peaks in January and February in the United States, but can start to show up in early October and last until May. Remember too, if you're traveling, that the flu seasons will differ.
2. **It's really contagious.** You get the flu when a person with the flu coughs, sneezes or talks and droplets containing their germs land in your mouth or nose. You **can also get the flu** by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose.
3. **It makes you feel pretty miserable.** Fever, chills, fatigue, aches, cough and a runny/stuffy nose are all part of having the flu. It can cause ear and sinus infection, bacterial pneumonia and make chronic diseases worse.
4. **Vaccine is the best prevention.** If the idea of being out of commission and sick as a dog doesn't appeal to you, get vaccinated. Available as a shot or a nasal mist, and recommended anyone over the age of six months, vaccination side effects are typically minor. But the vaccine only lasts one season, thanks to the flu virus mutating itself every year, so be sure to get re-vaccinated. And talk to your doctor to find out if you're one of those who can't get the vaccine.
5. **Prep your business.** Make sure your employees know if their health insurance covers the flu vaccine. Share information to stop the spread of germs, like coughing into your sleeve and wiping down hard surfaces with bleach wipes.

Schedule an appt. with Dr. Schuermann at 513-922-9660 or find a list of primary care physicians at TCH.com/PrimaryCare.