SAINT PETER'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Treating you better...for life.

YOUR GUIDE TO FLU PREVENTION

When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.

Our hands carry lots of germs which can enter our bodies if we touch our eyes, nose or mouth.

The flu season is more severe this season. "Washing your hands often and not touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands, which carry germs, are among the most important things you can do to stay healthy," says Amy Gram, director of Infection Control at Saint Peter's University Hospital.

One of the best defenses against the flu is to get the seasonal vaccine from your doctor. While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness. The vaccine can protect you from getting sick or help to lessen the intensity of your bout with the flu should you get it, says David Alcid, MD, director of Infectious Diseases at Saint Peter's University Hospital.

Adults should seek immediate medical attention if flu symptoms include shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, dizziness or confusion, severe vomiting or if flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and a worse cough. In children, emergency warning signs include fast or difficult breathing; blush or gray skin color; not being able to drink enough fluids; severe vomiting; not waking up or being unresponsive; irritability; or similar to adults, if symptoms return after they have improved.

Regardless of which strain of the flu strikes, it is best to check with your personal doctor about the best treatment options. Rest and antiviral medications count among the prescribed treatments available for any strain of the flu. And if you become ill with flu-like symptoms, stay home and avoid close contact with people so others don't become infected.

For more information about the flu visit njha.cdc.gov/flu/ or call the Department of Health and Senior Services at 1-800-367-6543. For more information about adult Infectious Diseases visit SaintPetersHCS.com/infectious-diseases or call 732-937-6008; for more information about pediatric Infectious Diseases visit SaintPetersHCS.com/pediatric-infectious-diseases or call 732-565-5437.

When you are sick, stay home to prevent others from catching your illness. Call your doctor.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.