Protecting Your Family from the Flu

The flu can be a nuisance. There’s the fever, the muscle pain, the cough and the runny nose. You and your affected family members basically feel lousy for days.

But for some people, the flu can be deadly. The virus can cause serious health problems in young children, pregnant women, older adults and anyone with a serious medical condition, such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease. These groups run a high risk of being hospitalized because of the flu.

Everyone 6 Months and Older Should Be Vaccinated

In 2010, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their flu vaccine recommendations. “The CDC now recommends an annual flu vaccine for everyone ages 6 months and older,” says Maria Isabel Rosas, M.D., a board-certified pediatrician with fellowship training in pediatric infectious diseases. “In the past, the CDC only specifically recommended it for children up to age 19 and for certain groups at higher risk for complications of the flu.”

Shot or Nasal Spray – Both Effective

An annual flu vaccine does not provide 100 percent protection against the flu. But it comes close. In one study on children, flu shots were 77 percent to 91 percent effective against the flu virus.

The 2010–2011 flu vaccine offers protection against three different influenza viruses, including the 2009 H1N1 (swine flu) virus. This means that your family can return to the regular routine of getting one seasonal flu vaccination a year. Last year, the H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccinations were administered separately.

Could you or your child get the new nasal spray flu vaccine rather than a shot? “It depends,” says Dr. Rosas. “The nasal spray is only recommended for healthy people ages 2 to 49. Children with asthma and other serious medical conditions need the shot instead. So, too, do children younger than age 2 and pregnant women.”

Dr. Rosas is a board-certified pediatrician.
Helping Rural Residents Access High-Quality Heart Attack Care

When someone is having a heart attack, every minute counts. The sooner the patient receives treatment to open a blocked coronary artery, the greater the chance for a full recovery. But what if you don't live near a hospital that provides the services that could save your life?

Memorial Cardiology Associates has been serving Bellville and Austin County for more than 10 years. Thanks to a new partnership between Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center, Memorial Cardiology Associates, Austin County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Bellville General Hospital, rural residents in these areas are just a quick helicopter ride away from top-of-the-line cardiac care. Memorial Hermann Life Flight® airlifts heart attack patients from outlying areas to Memorial City Medical Center, where they are immediately taken to the catheterization lab for balloon angioplasty to clear the blocked artery.

Partnering for a Good Outcome
This partnership is known as the STEMI Network. STEMI stands for ST-elevation myocardial infarction, a severe heart attack in which the coronary artery is completely blocked by a blood clot.

“When a heart attack patient develops a blood clot in a coronary artery, time is muscle. In other words, the sooner the clot can be dissolved or removed, and blood flow restored in the artery, more muscle will be saved,” says Stuart Jacobson, M.D., a board-certified interventional cardiologist affiliated with Memorial City Medical Center. “National guidelines recommend that the door-to-balloon time – the time from the patient’s arrival in the hospital until the start of angioplasty – should not exceed 90 minutes. Memorial City Medical Center has received national recognition for its achievements in door-to-balloon time. The next frontier is to shorten prehospital delays in treatment. By airlifting patients from Austin County to Memorial City Medical Center, we greatly reduce their travel time and improve their chances for a good outcome.”

Making the Most of Every Moment
The STEMI Network enables heart attack care for rural residents to begin as early as possible. Austin County EMS and Bellville General Hospital can perform an electrocardiogram in the field and send the results to the Emergency Center physician at Memorial City Medical Center.

Once the physician confirms the heart attack, Memorial Hermann Life Flight is dispatched, and the hospital’s cath lab team prepares to receive their patient. Specially trained nurses and technologists provide expert care for the patient en route to Houston.

“When heart attack patients don’t get the care they need in time, the risk of mortality increases, and survivors of delayed or ineffective treatment have a greater likelihood of battling congestive heart failure for the remainder of their lives,” says Dr. Jacobson. “With the STEMI Network, Memorial Hermann and Memorial Cardiology Associates are working to reduce the number of deaths and improve the quality of life for heart attack survivors by making it easier for more people to rapidly access high-quality cardiac care.”

Dr. Jacobson is a board-certified interventional cardiologist.
Custom Knee Replacements: Made With You in Mind

Just as no two knees are exactly alike, not all knee replacement surgeries are the same. At Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center, doctors are using breakthrough technology to perform knee replacements tailor-made to fit a person’s own unique anatomy.

Known as a Signature MRI-designed custom total knee replacement, this new surgical technique results in a more natural-feeling knee with a greater range of motion. Patients have less postoperative pain and recover much more quickly than with conventional total knee replacement.

“We see great results with MRI-designed custom knee replacements,” says Larry Likover, M.D., a knee surgeon who performs the procedure at Memorial City Medical Center. “With this procedure, there’s less pain and swelling and a quicker recovery. The knee feels great.”

Planning for Success
It does take planning to design a custom knee replacement. Four weeks before surgery, patients undergo magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) so exact measurement of the shape of the arthritic knee can be obtained. A digital model of the diseased knee is created, and special computer software is used to design the knee replacement.

Patients who have custom-designed knee replacements spend less time in the operating room than those having a conventional total knee replacement, Dr. Likover says, so the risk for infection and other complications is less. Recovery is quicker, and some patients return to normal activities in as little as six weeks. Recovery from traditional total knee replacement takes about four months, Dr. Likover says.

Weighing Your Options
If knee pain is keeping you from doing the things you love, talk with your doctor about the treatment that’s right for you. Dr. Likover says that if arthritis has damaged only one of the three compartments in the knee, a patient may only need a partial knee replacement. If a total replacement is required, an MRI-designed custom knee replacement provides the best chance for a great result.

“Advances in orthopedics have given us more tools to effectively treat disabling knee pain,” Dr. Likover says. “People don’t have to suffer. Help is here.”

DO YOU HAVE KNEE PROBLEMS?
Learn more about custom knee replacements during an upcoming webinar. For dates and times, visit memorialhermann.org/mckneepain.

Dr. Likover is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon.
Cell Phones and Brain Cancer: Are You At Risk?

Talk about popular: It’s hard to go anywhere these days without hearing the familiar tones of a cellular phone. In fact, as many as 100 million Americans now use cell phones. And it looks as if there will be many more in the years to come.

But cell phone technology is still new. Researchers point out that the long-term health effects from the low-level radio signals – or radiation – they emit are unclear. Some people claim there may be a link between these radio signals and brain tumors or cancer.

Experts are most concerned about the risks of holding handheld models near the head. This is because the antenna is the main source of radio signals.

Research Is Ongoing
“Brain cancer can take years – or even decades – to develop,” says Jay-Jiguang Zhu, M.D., Ph.D., a neurologist who specializes in treating brain and spine cancers and is affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. “Several large studies are now looking at the long-term risks of cell phone use. So far, research has been limited to short-term studies. One of these studies compared people with brain cancer to people without the disease. Researchers did not find a higher risk from using handheld cell phones.”

Another study of more than 1,500 people also found no increased risk of developing a brain tumor among people who used handheld cell phones for five or more years. And brain tumors did not occur more often on the side of the head on which the device was used.

Most studies to date have focused on analog cell phones. Today, many cell phones are digital. Still, experts point out that digital cell phones emit even less radiation than analog models.

What You Can Do
If you’re concerned about reducing radiation exposure from your cell phone, Dr. Zhu offers these tips:
• Use your cell phone only for short conversations.
• Use a conventional phone when available.
• Use a cell phone with a headset to put more distance between the antenna and your head.

While health risks are unclear, safety risks are not. Experts agree that using a cell phone while driving can be dangerous – and even deadly. One recent study showed that the risk of a traffic accident was four times greater among drivers using cell phones. This was true even for hands-free phones.

Dr. Zhu is a board-certified neurologist who specializes in neuro-oncology.

Brain and Spine Cancer Expertise
Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center’s medical staff includes the rare, specialized expertise of affiliated neuro-oncologists, who manage the treatment of spine and brain cancers. These physicians, who are also affiliated with Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center, offer the same expert cancer management close to home. For a physician referral, call 713.222.CARE (2273) or visit memorialhermann.org.
With the elimination of inpatient services at Spring Branch Medical Center, Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center is welcoming the following doctors to the Memorial Hermann Westside Campus Medical Plaza. These doctors will be relocating their practices in the coming months. Their relocation brings additional expertise to Memorial City Medical Center’s staff. The Westside Campus is conveniently located on the north side of I-10 and includes free parking.

**Memorial Hermann Westside**
1140 Business Center Drive
Houston, TX 77043

- **Saeid Abedin, M.D.**
  Ophthalmology
  Suite 550
  713.984.0900

- **M. Radwan Al-Sabbagh, M.D.**
  Gastroenterology
  Suite 380
  713.794.0400

- **Rene A. Amaya, M.D.**
  Pediatrician
  Suite 300
  713.464.9776

- **Ali F. Azimpoor, M.D.**
  Neurosurgery
  Suite 490
  713.932.1247

- **Maher M. Bishara, M.D.**
  Nephrologist
  Suite 100
  713.464.7768

- **Jeffrey N. Bowman, D.P.M.**
  Podiatrist
  Suite 510
  713.467.8886

- **Cesar A. Bravo, M.D.**
  Nephrologist
  Suite 100
  713.464.7768

- **Shiraz P. Dhanani, M.D.**
  Cardiologist
  Suite 500
  713.973.7445

- **Donald F. Gardner, M.D.**
  Endocrinologist
  Suite 540
  713.984.8200

- **Bechara Youssef Ghorayeb, M.D.**
  Otolaryngology
  Suite 560
  713.464.2614

- **Mohammad A. Haque, M.D.**
  Family Medicine
  Suite 230
  713.722.7272

- **Munah Jack Hawila, M.D.**
  Urologist
  Suite 208
  713.932.1822

- **Takehisa Ikeda, M.D.**
  Pediatric Infectious Diseases
  Suite 300
  713.464.9776

- **Kelly E. Kaesler, M.D.**
  Urologist
  Suite 405
  713.932.8165

- **James C. Lai, M.D.**
  Pain Management
  Suite 580
  713.337.7246

- **Daria B. Lee, M.D.**
  Pulmonologist
  Suite 115
  713.465.1585

- **Jeffrey Lee, M.D.**
  Geriatrician
  Suite 570
  713.464.7212

- **Drew J. Lomonte, D.D.S.**
  Dentist
  Suite 520
  713.464.1929

- **Maria Isabel Rosas, M.D.**
  Pediatric Infectious Diseases
  Suite 300
  713.464.9776

- **Ata Tom Salek, M.D.**
  Family Medicine
  Suite 200
  713.468.7911

- **Barry E. Troyan, M.D.**
  Internal Medicine
  Suite 110
  713.932.7011

**More Medical Experts Available Near You**

★ BELTWAY 8

Memorial Hermann Westside

Westview Dr.
Brittmoore Rd.
Willcrest Dr.
I-10

10301 Westheimer Rd.
As one of Thomson Reuters’ Top 100 Hospitals®, we’re setting a higher standard for healthcare.

Every year, Thomson Reuters conducts a quantitative study to determine which 100 U.S. hospitals are delivering exceptional care—care that saves lives, decreases patient stays and minimizes complications. And this year, Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center has made this prestigious list. We’re honored to be recognized and wish to congratulate Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital for joining us as the only two recipients earning this distinction in southeast Texas.
Discover how Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center can care for you and your family. To learn more about our services or for a physician referral, visit memorialhermann.org or call 713.222.CARE (2273).
Recognize Symptoms and Risks to Beat a Thyroid Disorder

Hormones produced in the thyroid gland control how the body uses energy. And if the thyroid releases too many or too few hormones – known as an overactive or underactive thyroid – your body’s systems can be thrown off balance. Unfortunately, these thyroid conditions often are overlooked because their symptoms are vague. The key? Knowing your risk and getting tested.

Women Are More At Risk
“Thyroid disorder is more common in women than men,” says Bhaskar K. Roy, M.D., a board-certified endocrinologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. “And risk increases with age. In fact, research shows that 20 percent of women older than 65 have a thyroid disorder. Women who have recently given birth also are at special risk.”

In addition, genes play a critical role in your likelihood of developing a thyroid problem. The chance of thyroid dysfunction increases if you or a family member, such as a parent or grandparent, has:

- Hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid) or hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid), including Graves’ disease
- An autoimmune disease such as type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, colitis or lupus
- An enlarged thyroid (goiter)
- Genetic traits such as gray hair before age 30, patchy hair loss, white spots on the skin called vitiligo or problems absorbing vitamin B12 from food, causing pernicious anemia

Categorize Your Symptoms
The two main types of thyroid disorders are:

- Hypothyroidism – More than 80 percent of thyroid disorders involve hypothyroidism. It occurs when the thyroid does not produce enough hormones to regulate the body efficiently. Signs include fatigue, heavy periods, intolerance to the cold, constipation, depression, and dry hair and fingernails.
- Hyperthyroidism – This condition occurs when the thyroid produces too many hormones, causing the body to

overwork. It leads to rapid heartbeat, trembling hands, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, menstrual irregularities, weight loss, muscle weakness and sometimes bulging eyes. Graves’ disease is the most common form of hyperthyroidism. With this disease, antibodies attack the thyroid, triggering it to produce excess hormones.

Take Steps to Get Tested
If you’re at an increased risk, talk with your doctor. Blood tests are used to determine your thyroid function. Once diagnosed, both hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism can be successfully managed.

Dr. Roy is a board-certified endocrinologist.
Have Digestive Woes? It Could Be a Sign of Celiac Disease

Most of us don’t think twice before we eat bread, cookies or pizza crust. But for those who suffer from celiac disease, these foods can wreak havoc on the digestive system. The culprit is a protein called gluten.

Many people may not be familiar with celiac disease since it was previously thought to be common only in Europe. Recent research, however, demonstrates that it is prevalent in the United States. One study estimates that it affects one in 133 Americans.

Females Affected More than Males
Celiac disease strikes both children and adults and affects everyone differently. Signs of celiac disease include but are not limited to the following:

• Abdominal bloating or pain
• Constipation
• Chronic diarrhea
• Weight loss
• Anemia
• Bone pain
• Irritability

“The wide spectrum of symptoms can hamper swift detection of the disease,” says Martin Mauk, M.D., a board-certified gastroenterologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center. “The condition also mimics symptoms commonly encountered with other conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, depression and ulcerative colitis. If celiac disease is suspected, your doctor will check for substances called antibodies in your blood.”

It Can Raise Risk for Other Conditions
If you have celiac disease, your body can’t properly digest foods that contain gluten. This decreases nutrient absorption into your bloodstream.

It’s important to control celiac disease since it increases the risk of developing cancer of the intestine, osteoporosis and seizures. Recent investigations also point to a link with schizophrenia.

Special Diet Helps Control Celiac Disease
Although celiac disease cannot be cured, symptoms can be managed by following a gluten-free diet. This means avoiding most grain, pasta, cereal and many processed foods that contain wheat, rye and barley. Oats also may be harmful – research is ongoing.

Despite these restrictions, you can still enjoy a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of foods, such as plain meat, fish, rice, vegetables and fruit. You can also buy gluten-free bread, pasta and other products. Talk with your doctor about working with a registered dietitian to develop a gluten-free eating plan.

Dr. Mauk is a board-certified gastroenterologist.
EVENTS AND SCREENINGS
OB/Maternity Facility Tours
Tours of the facility are held regularly. Registration is required.

CLASSES AND SEMINARS
FREE NewStart Weight-Loss Surgery
Seminars
Jan. 5, 13, 19 and 26; Feb. 2, 10, 16 and 23
Start off the New Year with a new you. Learn how weight-loss surgery can help you achieve your New Year’s goals. These seminars are for people morbidly obese with a body mass index of 30 or higher who are interested in learning about metabolic and weight-loss surgery. To register, call 713.242.4600.

Newborn Care Class
Teaches prospective parents the fundamentals of infant care. Cost: $30 per couple.

Prepared Childbirth Class
Prepares expectant parents for their childbirth experience. OB tour is included. Cost: $70 per couple.

Breastfeeding Class
Teaches expectant parents techniques to make breastfeeding a successful, satisfying experience. Cost: $30 per couple.

CPR for Infants
Teaches basic techniques used in the event of foreign-body airway obstruction (choking) in infants. Cost: $15 per person, $30 per couple.

SUPPORT GROUPS
Alzheimer’s
Meets the third Sunday of every month at 2 p.m. For more information, call 713.934.8844. Location: West Pavilion, Second Floor, Classroom A.

Better Breathers
Meets the third Thursday of every month at 3 p.m. Call 713.242.3555 or 3190 to learn more.

Breast Cancer
Meets the third Tuesday of every month, 6 to 7:30 p.m. For more details, call 713.242.3395. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

Cancer
Meets every Monday, 7 to 8 p.m. To learn more, call 713.242.3564. Location: Medical Plaza 2, First Floor, Suite 152.

Diabetes
Meets the second Thursday of the month, eight times per year, 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 713.242.3890. Location: West Pavilion, Frostwood Boardroom.

Mended Hearts
Meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, 6 to 7:30 p.m. To learn more, call 713.242.3440. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

Stroke
Meets the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Call 713.242.2906. Location: East Tower, Fourth Floor, Neuroscience Conference Room.

Weight-Loss Surgery
Meets the first Wednesday of every month, 7 to 9 p.m. Call 713.242.4600. Location: West Pavilion, Main Conference Center.

February is Heart Month
Celebrate with us by attending one of our heart events.
Visit memorialhermann.org and select “Classes & Events” for more details.
Dr. Maria Isabel Rosas is a board-certified pediatrician with fellowship training in pediatric infectious diseases. She attended medical school at the Universidad Central de Venezuela Luis Razetti School of Medicine in Caracas, Venezuela. She completed her residency and fellowship at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Jackson Memorial Medical Center, in Miami, Fla.

Dr. Stuart Jacobson is board certified in general cardiology and interventional cardiology. He attended medical school at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and did his internal medicine residency at Baylor. He completed his cardiology fellowship at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston.

Dr. Larry Likover is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon. He attended medical school at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and completed his residency at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston. He has a special interest in the knee, performing over 250 knee replacements every year.

Dr. Jay-Jiguang Zhu is a board-certified neurologist. He attended medical school at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He completed his residency at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Mass., and his fellowship in neuro-oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Bhaskar K. Roy is a board-certified endocrinologist. He attended medical school at All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India. He completed his residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, Pa., and his fellowship at the University Health Center of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Martin Mauk is a board-certified gastroenterologist. He is a graduate of Rice University and attended medical school at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. He completed his residency and fellowship training at Baylor College of Medicine as well.

FIND A DOCTOR NEAR YOU. For a physician directory, call 713.222.CARE (2273).

TUNE IN FOR THE HOUSTON HEALTH HOUR RADIO TALK SHOW! Set your radio dial to 700 AM KSEV from 1 to 2 p.m. every Monday through Wednesday for this LIVE radio talk show. Hosted by David Mobley, M.D., a board-certified urologist, the show invites listeners to phone in health questions to Dr. Mobley and physician guests from various specialties. Don’t miss this wonderful opportunity to have a FREE visit with a doctor on the radio! Call in questions to 281.558.5738 or *KSEV (*5738) for Verizon Wireless users. For Internet users, log in and listen at www.ksevradio.com.