

# NEWS RELEASE



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**For Immediate Release**

## **HALIFAX REGIONAL OFFERS TIPS TO FIGHT THE FLU**

**ROANOKE RAPIDS, NC (September 17, 2011)—Halifax Regional urges you to fight the flu this season by following some simple immunization tips.**

First, get a flu shot. “The most important step in protecting yourself against the flu viruses is to take a yearly flu vaccine,” said Susan Bullock, RN, infection control nurse at Halifax Regional.

Secondly, “we should practice ‘everyday prevention actions,’ including hand hygiene and staying home from work or school when sick,” she added.

The Centers for Disease Control recommend that everyone six months of age and older should get a flu vaccine. “The shots should be taken as soon as the vaccine is available (usually September/October) through March,” said Bullock.

Vaccination of high risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease, and people 65 years and older.

Vaccination also is important for healthcare workers and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to high risk people, says the CDC.

Halifax Regional is taking a leadership position by requiring employees to have a flu shot this season. Flu shots will be provided to employees at no cost in October and November. “Our employees know this is the right thing to do for the health and safety of our patients and to demonstrate leadership in the community,” said Will Mahone, president.

Halifax Regional is the 11<sup>th</sup> hospital in North Carolina to require employees to have flu shots, according to the North Carolina Hospital Association.

The CDC also recommends everyone take preventive actions to stop the spread of germs:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

Signs and symptoms of flu can include: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aching, headaches, chills and fatigue. People also may experience vomiting and diarrhea.

See your doctor if you experience these symptoms or would like more information on vaccinations and immunizations.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/)

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#### **About Halifax Regional**

Halifax Regional Medical Center is licensed for 204 beds, including psychiatric and nursery. A non-profit organization, Halifax Regional is fully accredited by the Joint Commission. For more information, visit [www.halifaxregional.org](http://www.halifaxregional.org).