



Pacific Medical Centers Newsletter

Safeguard Your Health This Fall

fall
2004

Preventive Health

Keeping the Flu at Bay

Influenza, or flu, is a common respiratory illness affecting millions of people each year. In addition to frequent hand washing, an effective way to protect yourself from the flu is to get vaccinated each year in the fall. Flu shots are recommended for:

- Adults and children with chronic heart and lung disease
- Anyone living in a nursing home or chronic care facility
- People 65 years of age and older
- People with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, anemia, cancer, immune suppression, HIV, or kidney disease
- Children and adolescents on long-term acetylsalicylic acid (ASA) therapy
- Health care workers, other caregivers, and household contacts capable of transmitting influenza to the above at-risk groups
- People at high risk of influenza complications who are traveling to areas where the flu virus is likely to be circulating

Certain groups should not be vaccinated. These include children under six months of age and people who have had a severe allergic reaction to eggs or a previous dose of the vaccine. Talk to your healthcare professional about the benefits of the flu shot based on your health condition.

Pacific Medical Centers has a patient-focused philosophy that puts your needs first, such as offering same-day primary care appointments when tomorrow won't do. For a same-day appointment at a clinic near you, call **1-888-4-PACMED** (1-888-472-2633).

Cold and Flu:

When to Seek Medical Help

In children, some emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- High or prolonged fever
- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Changes in mental status, such as not waking up or not interacting, being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, or seizures
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions (for example, heart or lung disease, diabetes)

In adults, some emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- High or prolonged fever
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest
- Near-fainting or fainting
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Source: Center for Disease Control

Flu Shots Offered at All Locations

Beacon Hill

Oct. 13 / Nov. 10 & 17

Northgate

Oct. 14 / Nov. 4 & 16

Lynnwood

Oct. 19 & 27 / Nov. 23

Totem Lake

Oct. 20 / Nov. 11

Madison

Oct. 21 / Nov. 18

Renton

Oct. 26 / Nov. 3 & 4

For more information about flu clinics call 206-621-4015.



Exercise

Cold Weather Workouts

An important way to stay healthy when the weather turns colder is to maintain a regular exercise schedule. As you prepare for your cold weather exercise regime, keep a few precautions in mind.

Bundle up right. Layered clothing is essential; you can always remove a layer. Lightweight synthetic fabrics next to the skin can help draw moisture away from the body's surface and provide excellent insulation.

Generate heat. Muscles may seem stiffer when it's colder, and it may take longer to become warm. Outdoor enthusiasts are advised to take a few minutes to raise the body's temperature to decrease the risk of pulls and strains.

Drink, drink, and drink. Replenishing lost fluids is just as important in the fall as it is in the summer. Dehydration can increase the risk of hypothermia, the lowering of the body's core temperature.

Try something new. Indoor enthusiasts can take advantage of new activities, such as weight training, cardio boxing, stair climbing, or elliptical machines. If you change your exercise regimen, start slowly and gradually increase the intensity, duration, and frequency of your workout.

Know when to stay in. Keeping an exercise routine, even when the weather is uncooperative, is key to boosting the immune system. But if you have a chest cold, stay away from the weights and exercise machines until it passes.

As an added convenience to our new patients, Pacific Medical Centers now offers online registration forms that you can print and fill out at home before your first appointment. This will allow us to see you that much faster.

To download the form, visit:

<http://www.pacificmedicalcenters.org/locations.registration.html>

Eating Well

Winterize Your Health

Fall can be hard on our eating habits. We tend to crave fats and sweets, although these foods impair our immune systems, making us prone to cold and flu viruses. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is crucial to staying healthy as the days grow cooler. Here are some tips:

- Maintain the goal of at least five servings of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Try new recipes. Food options are more limited during the fall months, so now is the time to get creative.
- Fall soups are an ideal way to get lots of vitamin and mineral goodness. Add a handful of fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables, depending on what's in season.
- Snacks such as dried fruits and baby carrots are low fat, easy to prepare, and readily available all year round.

Source: American Society for Clinical Nutrition

Pacific Medical Centers has six convenient locations throughout the Puget Sound area and welcomes patients with most major insurance plans. For an appointment, call **1-888-4-PACMED** (1-888-472-2633).

Stress Less

Combating the Fall Blues

When the serenity of summer gives way to the frenzy of fall, it's easy to start feeling more stressed and overwhelmed than usual. Fewer outdoor activities, busy school and work routines, and less sunlight can be tough on one's emotional health, but there are ways to minimize the amount of stress you experience this fall:

- Have a positive attitude.
- Try not to worry about things outside of your control.
- Problem solve with people around you. Ask them to help you alleviate stress.
- Exercise. A few extra minutes of exercise a day can benefit your overall health.
- Eat nutritional food. Decrease the amount of fat and sugar you eat.
- Avoid drinking caffeinated beverages.

- Meditate or take a class in relaxation and stretching techniques.
- Rest. Try to get eight hours of sleep each day.

Pacific Medical Centers has behavioral health professionals who work in partnership with adults, kids, and families to achieve quality emotional and mental healthcare.

For an appointment with a specialist, call **1-888-4-PACMED** (1-888-472-2633).

Healthy Kids

Quick Steps to Lunchbox Nutrition

When school starts, parents once again face the challenge of preparing healthy lunches and snacks that their kids will actually eat. Read our five tips on how to make lunch fast, fun, and healthy.

Be selective: Choose prepackaged food carefully, avoiding high-fat crackers and processed cheeses.

Include fruits and vegetables: Have at least one piece of fruit and one vegetable in your child's lunch every day. If your child dislikes veggies, try adding peanut butter or a low-fat dip.

Build strong bones: Calcium is important during the early years, so be sure to include yogurt, pudding, milk, or cheese. Use an insulated lunch kit, or put the milk in a thermos so it won't get too warm.

Skip the pop: Save soft drinks for special occasions and only include water, juice, or milk in your child's lunches.

Make it fun: Capture your child's imagination and appetite with unique and interesting foods.

Pacific Medical Centers has pediatric and family practice specialists at our Beacon Hill, Northgate, Renton, and Totem Lake clinics.

Quit smoking: Smokers have more than twice the risk for heart attack as nonsmokers and are much more likely to die if they suffer a heart attack.

Improve your cholesterol levels: The risk for heart disease increases as your total amount of cholesterol increases.

Control high blood pressure: Over 50 million people in the U.S. have high blood pressure, making it the most common heart-disease risk factor.

Get active: People who don't exercise have higher rates of death and heart disease compared with people who perform even mild to moderate physical activity. Even activities like gardening or walking can lower your heart-disease risk.

Eat right: Eat a diet low in fat and cholesterol. Try to increase the amount of vitamins you eat, especially antioxidants, which have been shown to lower your heart-disease risk.

Maintain a healthy weight: Excess weight puts significant strain on your heart and worsens several other heart-disease risk factors, such as diabetes.

Manage stress and anger: Poorly controlled stress and anger can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

Control diabetes: If not properly controlled, diabetes can lead to significant heart damage, including heart attacks and death.

Source: American Heart Association

If you are at risk for heart disease, talk to your healthcare professional about getting on track for a healthy heart.

Pacific Medical Centers now has cardiology services at our Madison clinic.

For appointments, call **1-888-4-PACMED** (1-888-472-2633), or call the Madison clinic directly at (206) 505-1101



Pacific Medical Centers offers an integrated, comprehensive network of primary and specialty care healthcare providers. We focus on prevention, early detection, and high-quality care that is respectful and responsive to your needs. We offer same-day primary care appointments in all six of our locations.

Locations

Beacon Hill

1200 12th Avenue S
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 326-2400

Lynnwood

19401 40th Avenue W
Lynnwood, WA 98036
(425) 744-7153

Madison

1101 Madison St, Suite 301
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 505-1101

Northgate

10416 5th Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98125
(206) 517-6700

Renton

601 South Carr Rd,
Suite 100
Renton, WA 98055
(425) 227-3700

Totem Lake

12910 Totem Lake Blvd NE,
Suite 101
Kirkland, WA 98034
(425) 814-5000

The Informed Patient

Prescription for a Healthy Heart

The bad news about heart disease is that it remains extremely prevalent among Americans, even those that feel and appear in good health. The good news is that the factors that determine your risk of developing heart disease are, to a large extent, under your control. The following are ways you can reduce the risk of heart disease.