

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

A newsletter for the Maine Medical Center family

## Flu FAQ with Hospital Epidemiologist August Valenti, MD



Every year, we receive a lot of questions about the severity of the flu season and the best ways to protect yourself. Maine Medical Center's care teams receive regular updates from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) about the flu and follow evidence-based protocols to prevent spread of the disease. Maine Medical Center's Hospital Epidemiologist, August Valenti, MD, answers some of our most frequently asked questions about this year's flu season and vaccines.

### When does flu season start?

The 2018-2019 influenza season officially began on Sept. 30. The Maine CDC is recommending everyone over the age of 6 months be vaccinated against the flu before the end of October, as influenza is already present in the state.

### Is this year's flu vaccine effective?

The effectiveness of the flu vaccine varies from year to year, but vaccination is always your best defense against flu. This year's vaccine protects against four different strains of the virus. There may be other strains of influenza that will circulate, and no vaccine is 100 percent effective. But vaccination can both prevent the flu and reduce its severity.

### Where do I get a flu shot?

Most people can get a flu shot through their primary care provider. Flu shots are currently available at all

Maine Medical Partners primary care offices and pediatric clinics. To see a list of adult and family medicine practices, click here. You can find a list of Maine Medical Partners – Pediatrics locations here. Many pharmacies also provide flu shots to adults, though MMC's hospital pharmacy does not.

### I've heard there are a few different kinds of vaccines? How do I know which one I should get?

Most people will receive what's known as a quadrivalent vaccine, meaning it protects against four types of flu. Those 65 and older may receive a high-dose trivalent vaccine instead.

The higher dose may do a better job protecting seniors. If you are over the age of 65, we encourage you to talk to your doctor about which flu shot is the best one for you.

The CDC has approved both a nasal vaccine and an injectable vaccine for children this year. Last year a nasal vaccine was not available. In general, Maine Medical Center pediatricians recommend the injection, but parents should talk to their child's pediatrician to determine what is best for their family.

You can learn more information about how to protect yourself at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

A graphic for 'THE EMPLOYEE FLU BLITZ IS OCTOBER 2-26'. It features a man wearing a red and black plaid turban and a grey blanket, with a thermometer in his mouth. The background is light blue with yellow and green circles. There are two callout boxes: a purple one on the left and a blue one on the right. At the bottom, there is a white banner with black text.

**THE EMPLOYEE FLU BLITZ IS OCTOBER 2-26**

Anyone with an employee badge gets the flu vaccine for FREE

See eNews for the schedule

All employees must be vaccinated, show proof of vaccination, or submit a declination form to Employee Health

# OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

## 40 Years

Ann Marie Branigan,  
OB/GYN  
Deborah Letarte, Maternal  
Fetal Medicine  
Cindy Rahkonen, Coding  
Roxanne Rogers,  
Cardiology  
Bruce Small, Distribution

## 35 Years

Deborah Barris, Radiology  
Nancy Bickford, NICU  
Gregory Warming, Food  
Services  
Tina Whipkey, PCS  
Administration  
Vladimir Wormwood,  
Cardiac Surgery

## 30 Years

Gayle Barstow, R1  
Candace Bragdon, Patient  
Access  
James Coyle, EVS  
Barb Heyl, Cardiac Surgery  
Jill Holden, Urology  
Steven McGrath,  
Pulmonary Medicine  
Charlene Ward,  
MaineHealth ACO

## 25 Years

Karen Gurney, MMP  
Administration  
Kenneth Lombard, MMP  
Chief Medical Officer  
Arlene McCormick-Miller,  
Continuing Care  
Nursery  
Laurie Nadeau, Patient  
Access

Debra Raspiller,  
MaineHealth Systems &  
Development

## 20 Years

James Bailinson,  
MaineHealth Legal  
Affairs  
Robert Blow, EVS  
Jennifer Caiazzo, Surgery  
Paul Cuenin, Quality  
Customer Service  
Bobbi Jo Frost, Health  
Information  
Management  
Margo Geyer-Tomuschat,  
Brighton First Care  
Sue Haney, Patient Access  
Kathryn Horton, IS  
Dawn James, Health  
Information  
Management  
Lynn Letourneau,  
Cardiothoracic ICU  
Gary Marchand, Financial  
Services  
Jeanne Parker, Pediatric  
Specialty Care  
Heidi White, Health  
Information  
Management  
Irina Yurkevich, Family  
Birth Center

## 15 Years

Faduma Ali, EVS  
Kathleen Berube, Volunteer  
Services  
Sara Bourgoin, Nursing  
Floats  
Cynthia Dexter, OB/GYN  
Meagan Dick, BBCH

Ray Esperanza, Linen  
Distribution  
Marilyn Flanders, R5  
Donna Gilbert, Employee  
Health  
Merissa Harmon, R7  
Melanie Krum, ASU  
Meridy Lippoldt, Vocational  
Services  
Yegana Mammadova,  
Health Information  
Management  
Edith Okenquist, Coding  
Susan Perron, IS  
Amugimo Rasu, EVS  
Barbara Skop, Admitting

## 10 Years

Gail Atwood, Scarborough  
Primary Care  
Helene Boucher, R4  
Timothy Daigle, Food  
Services  
Erika Dempsey,  
Cardiothoracic ICU  
Heidi Dobson, Sterile  
Processing  
Kelly Dunham, P3CD  
Erin Dustin, Med Staff  
Martha Gamache, MMP  
Surgical Care Casco Bay  
Xianghua Han, MMCRI  
Ahmed Hassan, Interpreter  
Services  
Michele Higgins, P3CD  
Julia Koger, Nursing Floats  
Juanita McDonald, R5  
Kari Oldmixon,  
Otolaryngology  
Matthew Pare, R5  
Efren Ramos, EVS  
Sharlene Smith, PCS  
Administration

Eugene Walls, Nursing  
Companions

## 5 Years

Melissa Chadbourne, R6  
Savannah DeFelice,  
Pulmonary Medicine  
John Dudley,  
Otolaryngology  
Ryan Ellis, EVS  
Elizabeth Emmons, ED  
Nursing  
Aaron Flint, General  
Mechanical  
Martha Grealey, Pediatric  
Specialty Care  
Briana Hailey, Orthopedics  
Judy Jurevic, Finance  
Vanessa Kearns, South  
Portland Pediatrics  
Mathew Leo, General  
Mechanical  
Chelsea Lussier, Patient  
Access  
Robert Mayberry, EVS  
Kristine McDonald,  
Westbrook Primary Care  
Tausha Moody, Brighton  
Pain Center  
Christine Nielsen, Portland  
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Mihoko Richards, ASU  
Victoria Spaltro,  
Switchboard  
Aaron Splint, Cardiology  
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Endocrinology &  
Diabetes  
Paul White, Pulmonary  
Medicine  
Danielle Wildes, Pharmacy



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MaineHealth

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