

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 2, 2015

MCHC Urges Discretion and Patience During Flu Season

Madelia, Minn. – Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic (MCHC) is asking the public's assistance in dealing with increased patient volume and wait times as a result of the current flu outbreak.

“We are seeing longer waiting times in our Emergency Department and Urgent Care because of the large number of patients presenting with influenza or influenza-like symptoms,” said Megan Gossman, BSN, RN, and Infection Preventionist at MCHC. “Not every patient requires direct medical care; and so we strongly urge patients to contact their health care provider before going to a clinic, Urgent Care or Emergency Department.”

Calling ahead gives health care officials the opportunity to appropriately triage the patient and perhaps save them a trip. It also gives physicians, nurses and other health care staff members the time to prepare and will help ensure patients get the appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.

“We know pharmaceutical companies are marketing directly to consumers, however not every patient is eligible, under clinical guidelines, to receive anti-viral medication,” says Gossman. “Patients should contact their health care provider before coming in and expecting to get a prescription for their symptoms. This will help us provide the most effective care, the most efficient care and will avoid patients experiencing unnecessary waiting and subsequent disappointment.”

The clinic can be reached at 507.642.5200 from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number for Urgent Care or the Hospital is 507.642.3255.

Here are some guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics on when to seek medical attention for flu symptoms:

When to call the doctor:

- If you or a child has flulike symptoms and a stiff neck, severe headache, severe ear pain or a very sore throat
- If your child is younger than 3 months and has a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- When fever rises above 104 degrees Fahrenheit repeatedly for a child of any age
- When fever persists for more than 24 hours in a child younger than 2 years.

- If the fever lasts more than three days in a child age 2 or older.
- If the child's chest hurts even when he or she isn't coughing

Call 911 if:

- You or a child has severe difficulty breathing
- A child is making grunting noises with each breath
- A flu patient has passed out or stopped breathing
- The lips turn blue when the patient isn't coughing

Go to the emergency room if:

- A child is breathing fast or has trouble breathing
- Skin has turned bluish
- A child is not drinking enough fluids
- A child is not waking up or not interacting
- A child is too irritable to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- There's fever with a rash
- An infant cries with no tears or has very few wet diapers
- There's difficulty breathing
- There's sudden dizziness or confusion
- Adults who are having difficulty breathing, chest or abdomen pain, dizziness, confusion, or severe vomiting need to head to the emergency room
- If the child's ribs pull in with each breath (these are called retractions)
- If the child can't take a deep breath because of chest pain
- If the child has severe chest pain, has coughed up blood or is wheezing

When do you know it's over?

We recommend that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other things you have to do and no one else can do for you. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol.) You should stay home from work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

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About Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic

Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic is a private, nonprofit facility staffed by a team of physicians and medical professionals that is profoundly committed to providing health care of the highest standards to Madelia and surrounding communities. As a 25-bed acute care hospital, we offer all the primary health services, such as medical/surgical, pediatric, emergency care and more. In 2011, we expanded our services to include a family medical clinic, which provides adolescent health, geriatric health, men's health, newborn health, pediatric health, preventative medicine and women's health. Over the years, we have proactively responded to the changing demands within the health care system, which has ensured our ability to deliver up-to-date medical services, purchase advanced medical equipment, and provide complete and compassionate care to all who enter our facility.