CORONAVIRUS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Influenza and the Coronavirus of 2019 (COVID-19) are both respiratory illnesses. While symptoms of both illnesses may be similar, they are caused by different viruses. Despite the growing concern about COV-ID-19, the Flu is currently having a much larger impact locally, with 6 deaths this season and hundreds of people hospitalized. More information about the similarities is below.

Prevention is key! Remember to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, cough into to crook of your elbow, and stay home when you are sick to minimize contact with others.

How are the Flu and COVID-19 Similar?

Symptoms:
- Both cause fever, cough, body aches, fatigue; sometimes vomiting and diarrhea
- Can result in pneumonia

Transmission:
- Both can be spread by touching surfaces that have the virus and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose

Treatment:
- Antibiotics will not treat either illness because they are caused by viruses
- Treatment will address symptoms, such as reducing fever
- Very severe cases may require hospitalization and the use of a ventilator to help breathe

How are the Flu and COVID-19 Different?

Transmission:
- It is unknown at this time if COVID-19 can be transmitted from being airborne, meaning that tiny droplets remain in the air could cause others to get sick after the sick person leaves the room/area

Vaccine:
- Many strains of the Flu can be prevented via the annual vaccine. For other strains the vaccine can reduce the severity of the illness
- There is no COVID-19 vaccine available at this time, but one is being developed

Prevalence:
- Flu: There are an estimated 1 billion cases worldwide, and between 9 and 45 million cases per year in the US
- COVID-19: There are about 82,555 cases worldwide, and 60 cases in the US as of February 28th, 2020.

More information can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

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