



Saline County Employee Newsletter

THE REAL COST OF THE FLU

by Seraine Page—edited

There’s no getting around it: flu season is the worst.

Not just for staffers who suffer from a bout of the flu, but also for the county employing workers who catch the flu.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu accounts for billions of dollars in medical costs and lost wages. Most staff members end up in the doctor’s office or sometimes even hospitalized.

The timeline of time off can be rough, too. Employees may need up to two weeks of sick days for flu recovery – sometimes longer if there are complications.

By understanding the seriousness of the flu and taking preventative measures – like Saline County hosting its flu shot clinic—you can get vaccinated and stay healthy during flu season.

Here’s a look at how dangerous the flu is physically and financially:

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THE REAL COST OF THE FLU—CONTINUED FROM PAGE #1...

The Difference: Allergies vs. Cold vs. Flu

Unfortunately, the only way to determine whether you have the flu is to see a doctor and get tested. Symptoms of allergies, cold, and flu can feel quite similar. For example, a runny, stuffy nose can be a symptom of all three health conditions.

Below we cover the symptoms of all three and how to tell the difference:

Allergy symptoms

Allergies typically run its course with clearer mucus, runnier noses, and a scratchy throat. Symptoms stay relatively the same and linger longer than the flu.

- Hay fever (also known as allergic rhinitis) can cause:
- Sneezing
- Itching of the nose, eyes or roof of the mouth
- Runny, stuffy nose
- Watery, red or swollen eyes

Cold symptoms

Colds usually don't cause high fevers – maybe 99 to 100 degrees. They typically follow a schedule: First you'll get a sore throat. Then congestion sets in. Then an aggravating cough that can last anywhere from 4-10 days. It's annoying but manageable with medicine and remedies to make you feel more comfortable.

Other cold symptoms include:

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sore throat
- Low-grade fever
- Cough
- Congestion
- Slight body aches
- Mild headache
- Sneezing

Flu symptoms

The flu comes with the worst of symptoms like body aches, chills and sweats, along with and more unpleasant symptoms. The flu usually lasts one to two weeks and will put you in bed for about as long.

Other flu symptoms to watch for:

- Fever over 100.4 F
- Muscle aches

- Headache
- Dry, persistent cough
- Fatigue and weakness
- Chills and sweats
- Nasal congestion
- Sore throat
- The Physical Effects of the Flu
- Unfortunately, the flu will lay you out.

Most flu-ridden employees experience side effects that contribute to lost productivity and the inability to carry out daily activities. Many people relate flu symptoms to feeling like “being hit by a truck” and it requires a lot of rest to recover fully.

The majority of people recover from the worst part of the flu within a week, but it may be a full two weeks of recovery time. For individuals who experience complications, healing can take even longer.

Flu related complications include:

- Pneumonia
- Bronchitis
- Ear and sinus infections
- Dehydration requiring an IV

The trickiest part of the flu is its sudden onset. Symptoms can come on and escalate very quickly, which can cause a large spike in unexpected employee absences.

Chronic medical conditions may become worse when contracting the flu, like asthma, diabetes, and heart problems. Pregnant women are also more susceptible to complications due to the flu.

The '17-'18 season was a record breaking flu season when an estimated 48.8 million people got sick and 79,400 people died from the flu and flu-related complications.

The Financial Impacts of the Flu

Bad cases of the flu can take up to two weeks recovery time, which means a lot of missed work days.

For small businesses this can be a major hit, especially when most teams are already maxed out with workloads.

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“Providing opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles and supporting an adoption of habits attitudes contributing to their positive well-being.” - Saline County Wellness Committee

THE REAL COST OF THE FLU—CONTINUED FROM PAGE #2



As tough as it can be for fellow colleagues to take on the work of an out-sick employee, it's better than spreading the flu throughout the worksite by having ill employees come in.

If possible, encourage your team members to stay home when they're sick and work remotely.

Employees often come to work sick, which spreads the virus to their coworkers, creating a domino illness effect. This can cause the flu to go around the office more than necessary, too. Not only does this decrease work output,

it will also increase healthcare costs when employees have to activate their insurance to see a doctor.

Between the costs of medicine, urgent care, and hospitalizations for the flu, U.S. businesses get hit with about \$10.4 billion in direct costs.

Saline County Flu Shot Clinic

Cold and flu season can be brutal. So prepare yourself now for the flu season!

The Saline County Wellness Committee has scheduled **Tuesday, October 15, 2019** as the day for the annual flu shot clinic. As provided last year, the event will be held from **10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Courthouse & from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Law Enforcement Center** available for employees and their families and other available staff members. *(Please remember to bring a copy of your insurance card with you, along with the forms provided to staff earlier—forms will be available on that day also.)*

It's tough to see fellow staff members get sick, so share this information with each other now to help prepare ourselves and workspaces for the arrival of flu season.

In summary, the flu season costs American businesses approximately \$10.4 billion dollars in direct costs for outpatient visits and hospitalizations for adults, according to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Since the flu is easily spread, employees with flu-like symptoms should stay home and contact their doctor before returning to work. Physicians can run a test to confirm if a patient does have the influenza virus if necessary. *—end*

ONLINE LEGAL RESOURCES

Continuum EAP's online resources includes a library of 100+ free fillable legal forms, including:

- Wills/Living Trusts
- Bill of Sale
- Rental Agreements
- Promissory Note

To get started, visit 4continuum.com and click "MEMBER LOGIN" at the top of the page. Use Saline County username and password. Contact HR for login information or give Continuum a call if experiencing difficulty.

*Next **Wellness Committee** Meeting: Monday, October 21, 2019 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.

*Next **Safety Committee** Meeting: Wednesday, November 20, 2019 in the Courthouse Conference Room, 8:30 a.m.



FOODS THAT PREVENT THE AFTERNOON CRASH

- FOODINSIGHT.ORG

If that droopy feeling zaps your afternoon performance, examine your diet. The culprit might be lunchtime foods like white bread or white rice — or foods that contain white flour, like pasta.

Are you eating enough protein? A protein deficit will affect your energy. Your body wants protein in order to do its jobs, like metabolizing and repairing. A little bit of unsaturated fat is a good thing to keep your metabolism up. Foods like avocados, nuts, seeds and oily fish, like salmon, are good choices. These also supply energy without the crash.

Finally, experiment with smaller, more frequent meals during the day, say every three hours, to see if your energy remains up. Keep a diary, and discover what works for you. *—end*

WHEN YOUR CO-WORKER SEEMS DEPRESSED

- EMPLOYERHEALTHCO.COM

You aren't trying to play doctor, but something's going on with your co-worker. He or she is coming in late, not "caring" as much about their work, putting things off, and their clothing choices or grooming habits have changed. They appear a little absent-minded, unsure of themselves, "scattered" or unorganized, and a little bit isolated or withdrawn from the rest of the group. Sometimes they are snappy, too.

*Although you can't diagnose,
you can share your concerns
(in private), listen and encourage
your co-worker to get help.*

A whopping 23% of employees will suffer from depression and miss work because of it, according to one key study. Getting over depression is not an exercise in willpower. It's a neurological disease process often requiring medical intervention to overcome.

As a peer, you could have tremendous influence — likely more than a family member with whom the employee possibly engages in conflict. Simply sharing your observations and encouraging a co-worker to consider contacting Continuum EAP for assistance could be enough to motivate him or her to do so. Depression left untreated can lead down a chronic path of worsening symptoms. You may help your co-worker avoid years of pain as the illness grows worse, and coming to work may even become more enjoyable for you, too. *—end*

5 Reasons to Use the Elliptical

by Adrienne Jordan



A common sight in fitness centers and home gyms, the elliptical machine has slats for the feet and poles for your hands that allow your arms to work in conjunction with your leg movements as you glide back and forth. The machine is popular because it is easier on joints, with less impact than running. It also has benefits that range from muscle activation to cardio to glute strengthening.

Here are five reasons to get on the elliptical during your next indoor workout.

1—IT'S LOW-IMPACT

“The elliptical is a great piece of equipment for people getting back into working out that may have too much bodyweight, in order to prevent weight-bearing joint injuries — such as the feet, ankles, knees, hips and lower back,” says Rudy Gehrman, DC, executive director and founder of Physio

Logic NYC. Once the body weight comes down, incorporating the treadmill would be next, then eventually outdoor running.

2—YOU CAN WORK UPPER- AND LOWER-BODY

“Be cautious of overuse and repetitive stress conditions that the elliptical machine can cause, as their motions and resistance are very linear, not offering enough variety of motion,” says Gehrman. It’s important to change your motion to combat this, and to move from machine to machine after a period of time. You can incorporate resistance for your upper body by utilizing the handles. “Similar to the treadmill, moving in different directions on this machine will aid in preventing repetitive stress syndromes, create a more balanced body and give you a better workout,” advises Gehrman.

3—IT ADDS INTENSITY

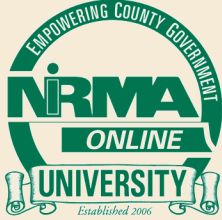
Ellipticals often have a resistance feature that is a great way to challenge your fitness. “Though you can structure many different types of workouts with ellipticals, one of the best things to focus on is maintaining a specific cadence while adding resistance,” says Mecayla Froerer, a NASM-certified personal trainer at iFit. Having a machine with many resistance options helps to lean out your legs and improves your cardiovascular fitness at the same time.

4—DOING INCLINES MAY EASE BACK PAIN

One important thing to look for when choosing an elliptical is whether it has an incline feature or not. “Incorporating incline during your workout is a great way to engage your posterior chain, which is a key element to movement and can aid in alleviating lower back pain,” says Froerer. Having an incline feature can take your elliptical workout to the next level by also increasing calorie burn during your total-body workout.

5—GOING LATERAL RECRUITS MORE MUSCLE

A lateral elliptical trainer is a machine that moves side-to-side instead of front to back. According to a 2011 study conducted by the University of Tampa, lateral elliptical trainers were scientifically proven to burn more calories and fat — in the same amount of time — as other ellipticals and cardio trainers. The study showed the sideways motion recruits more muscles than standard elliptical trainers. It also produced a targeted heart rate faster than on other machines, resulting in significant cardio and weight-loss benefits. —end



OCTOBER- DECEMBER, 2019 —NIRMA ONLINE UNIVERSITY CLASS

The upcoming quarter offers the following NIRMA Online University course. Successful completion provides 75 Wellness incentive points by completing the following offering:

- ◆ "Eating Right for Health & Fitness"

OCTOBER QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Which previous flu season saw almost 80,000 people die from flu-related illnesses.

- A: 2015-2016
- B: 2016-2017
- C: 2017-2018
- D: 2018-2019

Email your name and correct answer to: salinewellness@gmail.com

**Accepted answers must be received prior to the subsequent month's newsletter distribution.*

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

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“WALK ACROSS NEBRASKA”

The “Walk Across Nebraska” mini-challenge is nearing completion. All participants, via their team captains will need to submit their final walking distances to Jamie Houser by end of day, Friday, October 11th. All the teams have been kickin’ up quite a bit of dust! Great work! *-end*

2020 “WELLNESS PORTAL”

The Wellness Committee would like to thank all those who made the effort to submit their 2020 Wellness Program signup sheets as soon as possible last month. This helps the committee plan, not only for 2020 but anticipate 2021 and beyond, using an online portal to track activity and medical data through Workwells’ MyVia Portal. The 2020 year will become the testing ground for the future of the Wellness Program. The thirty (30) staff members who gave indication of a commitment to use their own “Fitbit” device, or those offered/loaned by Saline County, will use the Portal in 2020. This will allow ongoing tracking of information, activity, medical visits and other such wellness incentive items, and be easily updated on the portal. If there are others who would like to be involved in this, please let Tim McDermott know ASAP; before devices are distributed & the portal building begins. *-end*

PREPARING FOR 2019 FLU SHOTS

The Wellness Committee has worked to schedule Tuesday, October 15, 2019 as the day for the annual flu shot clinic. As provided last year, the event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Courthouse & from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Law Enforcement Center. Chose your time and location at will. *-end*

SELF DEFENSE—SESSION #2

Saline County Deputy Kevin Vogel continues to work toward an appropriate date/location in which to hold a follow-up “Self Defense” training session. It is likely to be held sometime in November at the Wilber High School. Stay alert to forthcoming announcements. *-end*

NOTE: Articles found in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical or legal professional.