

## ***A Helpful Guide for Older Adults on Beating Flu and RSV This Season***

As the cooler weather arrives in Houston, it's important to know about the flu and the respiratory syncytial virus (known as RSV). Last year, many people in our area were hospitalized by these viruses.

The flu can make you feel very tired, achy, and feverish, while RSV can cause coughs and trouble breathing.

Both of these viruses can lead to more serious, life-threatening conditions such as pneumonia or hospitalization. Knowing the signs can help you seek help early and keep you safe.

Here are some helpful tips to protect yourself throughout the fall and winter seasons especially if you are:

- Over 60 years old
- Have chronic health conditions
- Have a weakened immune system
- Live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

### **Stay Up to Date with Your Vaccinations:**

Vaccines are the best protection against flu and RSV. Don't forget that Community covers these shots so be sure to take advantage of those free resources today.

It's important that you get your annual flu and RSV shot in the early fall because the illness season usually lasts from mid-September through the end of March.

There is also a vaccine available to protect you from severe RSV. You can get both shots at once and there is no maximum age for getting either vaccination.

For help with scheduling, finding a doctor, or for more information, call Member Services today at 1.888.760.2600.

[You can also click here to request appointment assistance, getting a ride to the doctor, or both](#)

### **Know Where to Go:**

Remember that both the flu and RSV can lead to serious complications. Having a plan for deciding when to go to your doctor, urgent care, or the ER is very important.

Urgent cares can help you avoid the long delays in the ER. This means you can get the care you need faster. Seek emergency help (or call 9-1-1-) if you have trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion, or a high fever (above 104° F) that doesn't go down.

If you are ever unsure of where to go or what to do next you can call our 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line: 1.888.332.2730 or (TTY 711)

### **Hygiene is Your Superpower:**

**Handwashing:** The easiest way to prevent the spread of flu, RSV and other viruses is by washing hands regularly. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing, using the bathroom, and before eating.

**Cover Your Cough:** Make sure to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze. This simple habit can prevent viruses from spreading.

By following these simple steps, you can greatly reduce the risk of getting flu or RSV. Call our



Member Services line today at 1.888.760.2600. We are always here to help!