

## Michelle Endresz

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**From:** Heidi Chapman on behalf of Amy Tucker  
**Sent:** Friday, August 30, 2024 1:13 PM  
**To:** Amy Tucker  
**Cc:** Heidi Chapman; Laytinya Brooks; Jarrod L. Bagatell  
**Subject:** CMO BLAST: Anticipating Respiratory Illness Season 2024 – 2025  
**Attachments:** Annual Influenza Education 24-25.pdf; Anticipating Respiratory Illness Season 2024-25 \_final draft2\_jb\_08272024.pdf; COVID-19 Exposure Protocol - Refresher \_ August 2024.pdf

**Importance:** High

### Sent on behalf of Dr. Jarrod Bagatell, Medical Director, Employee / Student Health...

Heading into the Labor Day weekend, Upstate's Employee/Student Health and Infection Prevention Departments reminds our Upstate teams to stay safe as we plan for respiratory illness.

Please take a moment to read the attached memos for guidance. Key highlights include:

- Flu Crew appointments will be available from the end of September 2024 through early November 2024. Dates TBD.
- Please read and complete your annual Influenza Vaccination Education for 2024 – 2025 via Brightspace by October 4, 2024.
- Please review the attached protocol for a staff member who is COVID positive.

Thank you.

Amy

Amy Tucker, MD, MHCM  
Chief Medical Officer  
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, Norton College of Medicine

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**Influenza: What is “The Flu”?** A contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Symptoms can include fever, cough, fatigue, headache and body aches, sore throat and runny nose. It can cause mild to severe illness, including the potential for death. It is spread by coughing, sneezing, direct physical contact and contact with objects that can carry the virus (e.g., doorknobs, phones, etc.).

**Upstate’s goal is to protect our patients, employees and students from the influenza virus and to prevent its transmission between coworkers and patients.**

**It is important to know that a person may be able to infect others one day before flu symptoms start and for 5-7 days after becoming sick.**

**The Flu vaccination does NOT protect against COVID-19.**

## **Prevention**

- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) the best preventative measure is receiving the flu vaccination. CDC has recommended vaccination of all healthcare workers since 1981.
- If vaccinated, healthcare workers can protect their health and the health of their families, coworkers, and patients.

## **Hand Hygiene and Cough Etiquette (How do I protect myself and people around me?)**

- Clean your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, or cleanse them with an alcohol-based hand rub on a regular basis.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes as much as possible.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands, or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and discard in the waste basket.

## **Proper Management of Flu-like illness in Healthcare Personnel**

- Whether you received an influenza vaccination or not, if you develop respiratory symptoms and/or fever, you should not report to work, or if already at work, you should have on a face mask, promptly notify your supervisor of your illness and leave work.
- **If you are ill, contact the Employee/Student Resource Line at 315-464-8436 (4-THEN)**
- Return to work status will depend on symptom improvement, duration of time without fever, and the results of any respiratory viral testing.
- Strict adherence to hand washing, appropriate face mask use, and physical distancing is essential.

## **Mask Requirement**

- As required by NYS law, personnel who are not vaccinated against influenza **MUST** wear a surgical or procedure mask during the flu season while working in areas where patients are typically present.
- The mask requirement will begin and remain in effect during the period when the NYS Commissioner of Health determines that influenza is prevalent. Failure to comply with this law can result in disciplinary action.

## **Free Influenza Vaccinations**

- Will be offered to staff, volunteer and students with valid Upstate I.D.
- For available Flu Vaccine Clinics click on Calendar at [www.upstate.edu/ipage/intra/](http://www.upstate.edu/ipage/intra/).
- Available at Employee/Student Health by appointment only <https://eshportal.upstate.edu/>
- Documentation of flu shots received elsewhere should be submitted to Employee/Student Health via ESH portal (<https://eshportal.upstate.edu/>) or fax to 315-464-5471

## **Common Myths**

**-You can catch the flu from the vaccine**  
Flu vaccinations are made with either inactivated viruses or no virus at all, thus it cannot transmit the virus to you.

**-If you get the flu, the shot didn’t work**  
The flu vaccine is not 100% effective so there is still a chance of getting the flu, but the symptoms may be lessened. It is also possible to get different viruses during flu season that have the same symptoms but are not actually the flu.

**-You can’t spread the flu if you’re feeling well**  
If someone is carrying the flu virus they can infect others without having any symptoms.

**-Getting the flu vaccine is all I need to do to be protected from influenza**  
Frequent hand washing and avoiding contact with those who have the flu also help keep you from getting sick.

## **The Fair, The Flu, and Fall Planning**

It's that time of year when we plan for respiratory illness season and update you on what you can expect and how you can protect yourself, your co-workers, and your family from these easily spread illnesses, while mitigating their potential health consequences.

COVID continues to be endemic, and we should anticipate an increase in the number of cases into the fall and winter months.

**Be sure to get vaccinated to protect our patients and try and keep the hospital and our campus as a safe place to work.**

Upstate's Employee/Student Health will begin to offer the approved, updated Moderna COVID vaccines to our staff, volunteers, and students once we have secured a supply from our hospital pharmacy. CDC informs that "the updated vaccine will target the component that corresponds to the Omicron variant KP.2 strain of SARS-CoV-2. The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have been updated with this formula to more closely target currently circulating variants and provide better protection against serious consequences of COVID-19, including hospitalization and death."

**We are in the process of planning our "Flu Crew" efforts to offer several Flu/COVID vaccination clinics from the end of September through early November (dates TBD).**

You may directly schedule a vaccination appointment with Employee/Student Health at either their Jacobsen Hall (downtown) or Community Hospital Health Offices <https://eshportal.upstate.edu/>, when vaccine supplies are available.

**We encourage everyone to receive both COVID and Flu vaccinations at their earliest convenience.** *(Please note that regarding COVID vaccine, it is recommended that a person wait 90 days after COVID illness before receiving a COVID vaccine to optimize a boost in immunity following a period of antibody protection after COVID illness.)*

**We can reduce the impact that COVID and Flu illnesses have on our workforce by consistently practicing hand hygiene, wearing a face mask, following reasonable respiratory protection guidance, especially if you should have any respiratory illness symptoms or you've been exposed to someone with a viral illness, and not come to work sick.**

As an academic health center and "One University" we maintain COVID isolation recommendations consistent with those for healthcare workers (vs. the "general population"). As such, it is **important that you review the attached "refresher" which can be found on the iPage Self Report COVID-19 Test/FAQs.**

<https://www.upstate.edu/coronavirus/intra/self-reporting.php>

Appreciating that we are a "mixed bag" of employees, students, and researchers who work in varied locations on a larger campus that includes a teaching hospital, it is essential that we stay on the same page (literally) to ensure the health and safety of our institution.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to these efforts.

Sincerely,

Employee/Student Health  
Infection Prevention  
Upstate Medical University

August 27, 2024

References:

Upstate Medical University's Influenza Vaccine Education 2024-25 pdf (attached)

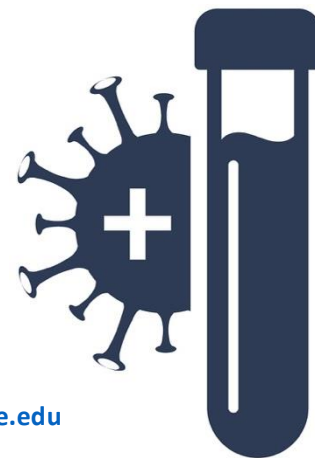
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/s-t0627-vaccine-recommendations.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/flushot.htm>

# COVID-19 Exposure Protocol - Refresher

(As of August 2024; information subject to change dependent on DOH & CDC guidelines)



For any question or concerns related to the following contact:

**Employee/Student Health (ESH)**

**315-464-4260** [ESHealth@upstate.edu](mailto:ESHealth@upstate.edu)

Staff/Student **COVID Resource Hotline**

**315-464-8436**

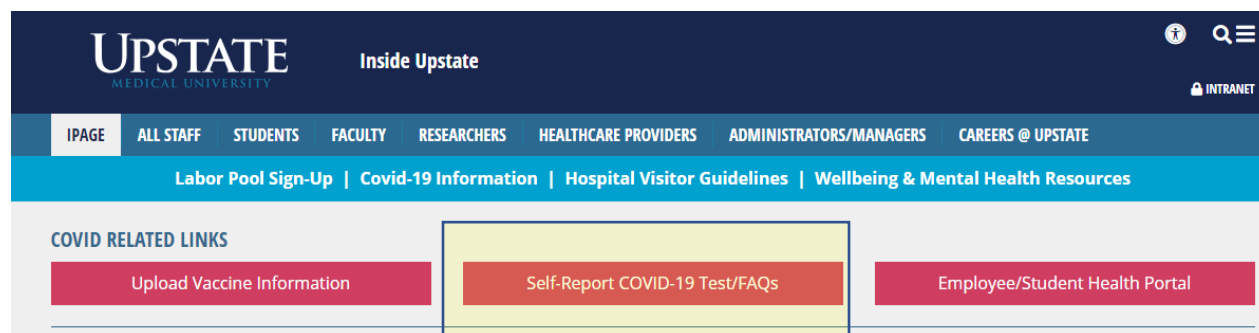
or refer to **Policy**

[COV P-01 COVID-19 Exposure Protocol](#)

## Staff member has a Positive COVID-19 test

### 1. Staff member will:

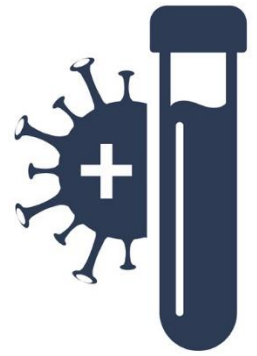
- Notify the manager or call in line
- Go to Upstate i-page. - <https://www.upstate.edu/ipage/intra/>



- Click on **Self-Report Covid-19 test/FAQs**
  - Complete the form in Self-Serve (info on form will go directly to Employee/Student Health for monitoring and reporting purposes. Managers/Supervisors also see a partial record)
- If a staff member does not have access to the internet or is having difficulty with the self-reporting link/form:
    - CALL Employee/Student Health Mon-Fri 7:00 am – 4:30 pm.**
    - IF it is after hours or weekends when calling, leave a message and you will get a return phone call on the next business day.
    - IF the staff member needs to speak to someone immediately AND ESH is CLOSED:
      - Call the Staff/Student **COVID Resource Hotline**
  - Please Note: ESH does NOT call every employee who tests positive!  
*\*\* If ESH has questions after reviewing the self-report form, they will reach out to the staff member.*

# COVID-19 Exposure Protocol - Refresher

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## Out of work timeframe

**Minimum of 7 days** – timeframe will vary dependent on repeat test results and/or symptoms

### When does it start?

**Day 0** – symptom onset **OR** test date, whichever is earliest

*See calendar below for example of counting days*

## Return to work testing guidelines (days 5-7)

**\*\*STAFF SHOULD ONLY TEST INITIALLY & BETWEEN DAYS 5-7 OF THEIR ILLNESS.**  
They do NOT need to test again after this timeframe in order to return to work.

### Antigen home tests

- 2 tests total completed
  - 1 test on day 5
  - 1 test on day 7
- **2 Negative results:** eligible to return on day 8
- **1 or 2 Positive results:** eligible to return on day 11

### PCR lab test

- 1 test completed between days 5-7
- **Negative result:** eligible to return to work on day 8
- **Positive result:** eligible to return to work on day 11

### Unable to test between days 5-7

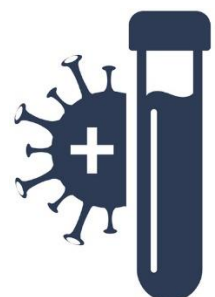
- Eligible to return on day 11

## Additional Eligibility requirements to return to work

- Symptoms must be resolved or mild to moderate with improvement
- Must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications
- **Complete the Return to Work/Clearance Chatbot**
  - iPage → Self-Serve → Employee Health → Return to Work Form

*See screenshot below*

## COVID-19 Exposure Protocol - Refresher



(As of August 2024; information subject to change dependent on DOH & CDC guidelines)

## Symptom and Testing – Calendar example

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4 <b>DAY 0</b> Symptom onset date	5 Initial test date	6	7
8	9 <b>DAY 5</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Home Test Or One PCR Between days 5 - 7	10	11 <b>DAY 7</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Home Test	12 <b>DAY 8</b> Return to work if negative test(s) between days 5-7	13	14
15 <b>DAY 11</b> Return to work with any positive test between days 5-7	16	17	18	19	20	21

## Return to Work Form (Chat-bot)

The screenshot shows a web application titled "Self-Serve" with a hamburger menu icon. Below the title is a search bar labeled "Search for an Application...". A list of application categories is displayed, each with an icon and a right-pointing chevron: "CAMPUS" (building icon), "CAMPUS PURCHASING" (shopping bag icon), "COMMUNITY AND GIVING" (hand icon), and "EMPLOYEE HEALTH" (lock icon). The "EMPLOYEE HEALTH" category is expanded, showing a list of options: "COVID Tracking", "Return to Work Form", "Patient Contact", "Submit COVID Positive", "Submit COVID Result", and "UpHealth". A blue arrow points to the "Return to Work Form" option.