

Flu vaccination reduces chance of complications

By Kelsey Allen
Mountain Medicine



While studying medicine in Tennessee, I worked with a group of doctors charged with managing patients sick enough to be admitted to the hospital for closer surveillance. During this time, a roughly 60-year-old man entered our care.

It was determined through testing that he had originally presented with the flu, which later developed into pneumonia. This scenario is not uncommon to those who suffer from severe flu symptoms.

As this patient progressed in our care, he required more and more treatment. Eventually, he was transferred to a larger hospital and died within a week.

A few days later, his wife presented to our care with very similar symptoms. Like her late husband, she was sent to a larger hospital and died within a week.

Although some may contract the flu virus and successfully fight it with rest, fluids, over-the-counter medications and chicken noodle soup, this virus can place our bodies in a vulnerable position by weaken-

ing our defense systems.

This weakened state can allow other microbes to infect our bodies — as exemplified by the patients in Tennessee. The flu virus coupled with other infections can be complicated and difficult for our bodies to manage and recover.

Minor complications of the flu can consist of ear and sinus infections and bronchitis. The flu may also lead to more severe complications including development of pneumonia as well as the worsening of congestive heart failure, asthma and COPD.

The more severe complications can lead to hospital stay including the intensive care unit. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies show that 80,000 people died from the flu virus last year — a high for the last three decades. Those who are most susceptible to complications from the flu are children younger than 5, individuals older than 65, residents of nursing



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homes and pregnant women.

Flu symptoms consist of sudden onset of fever, chills, body aches and coughing. These symptoms may appear to be similar to the common cold.

Typically, the flu will present with more severe symptoms, however, further testing may still be required to distinguish between the flu or common cold.

The flu can be debilitating for up to multiple days — individuals find regular tasks difficult and even exhausting. Those experiencing the flu often require many hours per day resting.

In our most recent article, we discussed a few simple measures to prevent infections. One section needs to be highlighted — vaccinations.

Many healthcare professionals have witnessed the severity and far-reaching effects of the flu. Thus, we encourage our patients to receive the flu vaccine in hopes of preventing infection and further complications.

Each year, researchers monitor the most prominent types of flu viruses and create a vaccine to combat them. The effectiveness of the vaccine varies from year to year due

to the unpredictable and frequent changes in a virus’s makeup. Regardless of the precision toward the prevention of the exact type of flu, there are other benefits that dramatically work in your favor.

Individuals who receive a flu vaccination may still become infected with the flu virus and experience symptoms. However, individuals experience less severe symptoms and are less likely to develop more severe complications as discussed above.

Added to this is less time taken away from work and other responsibilities. Also, these individuals are less likely to enter hospital care and even more unlikely to enter the intensive care unit. If they do enter these facilities, their recovery time is much faster.

The flu vaccine is a simple and cost-effective way to prevent infection. It also adds the benefit of not requiring added treatment if one happens to become infected.

Kelsey Allen, D.O., is a family medicine physician at Mountain View Medical Clinic in Enterprise. Mountain Medicine is a collaboration between Ron Polk and Allen.

LETTERS

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Mona Williams is a straight-forward, dedicated public servant. She has served as the judge of our circuit and has done an admirable job. She has proven that she is capable of the fair, even, balanced application of law to each individual case. Her personal integrity and reputation for fairness are unquestioned. She is by far the better choice for our circuit court judge. I strongly endorse her.

Cory Larvik
La Grande

Support Wes Williams in race for judge

I support Wes Williams for circuit court judge.

I have known Wes for more than 30 years, going back to when we were

both teaching at Sandy High School and living on the flanks of Mount Hood. In those days, Wes was an extremely accomplished young teacher who taught U.S. history and was the mock trial coach.

On many occasions when I had a free period, I would drop in on his class to observe, with the hope of improving my own teaching skills. Wes was a master teacher, but what was most impressive to me was the great respect, which he showed all his students and how that respect was returned to him.

Wes left teaching to pursue his dream of practicing law and opened his law practice in La Grande. The same traits that Wes developed as a teacher are evident in his law practice.

His hard work and preparation, his respectful treatment of all people, his fairness and thoughtfulness, these qualities make up the bedrock of Wes Williams’ character and will serve to make him an outstanding judge.

Tim Troutman
La Grande

I have practiced law for nearly 30 years and began practicing in Wallowa and Union counties when I moved to northeastern Oregon in 2000. I met Wes Williams within months of coming to this area and have known him for close to 20 years.

During that time, Wes has helped me with difficult aspects of my own cases, and I have had the opportunity to observe him in court during some of his most challenging and difficult trials. I am supporting Wes for judge in Wallowa and Union counties because I believe he is the most capable and qualified candidate for that position.

Our judicial district’s two judges must be able to handle both civil and criminal cases, which have very different rules and procedures and different subject matters. In his decades of practice, Wes has gained extensive experience in both areas, giving him a broad understanding of the law.

His experience will enable him to hit the ground running and to imme-

diately handle both kinds of cases knowledgeably and efficiently.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to vote for Wes. He is the most qualified candidate and will provide our counties with the best and fairest judge.

Anne Morrison
La Grande

I am supporting and voting for Wes Williams for circuit court judge for Union and Wallowa counties.

I met Wes 20 years ago on a trip to La Grande for a court matter involving Wallowa County. For years I saw him as a civil practice attorney and as a criminal defense attorney in Wallowa County and as a colleague whenever we met.

At all times he was well-informed on the applicable law in each case and thoroughly prepared to present that case for his client, whether a civil law or criminal law matter. In addition, he was always considerate and respectful to the court, opposing counsel, and all

witnesses from both sides of the case.

Experience in many areas of the law is essential for a judge in our counties. The judge must be prepared to deal on a daily basis with cases in civil law from domestic relations and business transactions to personal injury and real property cases and in criminal law from barking dogs to murder.

The judge does not have the privilege of specializing as is common in bigger cities. We have practices in all these areas for 22 years and is prepared to handle any of the legal issues that may arise in court.

It takes all of these characteristics to make a first-rate judge, and Wes Williams has always exhibited them in his years of practice of the law. That is why I am supporting him and voting for him for circuit court judge for our two counties, and why I urge all voters to vote for Wes by Nov. 6.

Daniel Ousley
Former Wallowa County and Wheeler County District Attorney

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