AU Health limits hospital visitors to help reduce spread of flu

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AUGUSTA, Ga. (Dec. 9, 2019) – Augusta University Health is temporarily restricting hospital visitation for friends and family age 18 and younger in an effort to help prevent the spread of influenza virus and other circulating respiratory illnesses. Guests who are experiencing flu-like symptoms should not visit patients at AU Medical Center or Children’s Hospital of Georgia. “Modified Family Presence Posters” have been placed at all of the hospital entrances to help spread the message to visitors.

As an additional precaution, the Children’s Hospital of Georgia has canceled all special events in an effort to limit the number of people entering and exiting the children’s hospital to keep patients safe.

“Although we realize that restricting visitors is an inconvenience, our primary concern is the health and safety of our patients,” said Dr. Philip Coule, chief medical officer. “Restricting visits from those that are ill or known to have a higher risk of transmitting influenza helps to protect our patients from the flu. For those who have not been immunized against the flu, we encourage you to get your flu shot, especially people who are at a higher risk.”

The flu virus is very contagious and spreads quickly. Besides limiting exposure, frequent hand-washing is a good preventive measure. The best way to keep it from spreading is for those infected to stay home and away from others while they are sick. A visit to the doctor’s office for prescription medication is often unnecessary, as over-the-counter medication for fever reduction is usually all that is needed. Beyond that, it’s best to get plenty of rest, drink plenty of water and let the virus run its course.

Symptoms of flu and flu-like illnesses include fever of 100 degrees or higher and any of the following:

- Cough and/or sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headache and/or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

For weekly updates on the influenza virus, visit www.cdc.gov/flu.

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campuses in Augusta and locations across the state. More than 9,000 students choose Augusta for educational opportunities at the center of Georgia’s new cybersecurity hub, and experiential learning that blends arts and application, humanities and the health sciences. Augusta is home to Georgia's only public academic health center, where groundbreaking research is creating a healthier, more prosperous Georgia and world-class clinicians are bringing the medicine of tomorrow to patient care today.

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