Practice good hygiene and get your flu shot early this season.

It’s Time for YOU to Think about the FLU

The H1N1 pandemic was finally laid to rest over the summer, and I’m sure that most of you were happy to see it end. However, like clockwork, flu season is again upon us. This year, though, the vaccines for seasonal flu and H1N1 have been combined, so only one shot is necessary.

As always, prevention is the best course of action for protecting yourself and your loved ones. Wash your hands often and use a hand sanitizer between washings. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and make sure that tissues are disposed of properly. Remember to regularly disinfect hard surfaces such as desks, countertops, keyboards, phones, purses, and so forth. If you haven’t felt well, it’s probably a good idea to wash your bed linens well and to change out your toothbrush.

It’s also important to get your flu shot. Many pharmacies around the metro are already offering the flu shot at a cost ranging from $24 to $30. The City/County Health Department is scheduled to have their flu vaccine available beginning in October. Because of state budget shortfalls this year, the Health Department will also be assessing a $25 fee for the vaccine. People on Medicare but not an HMO, those on SoonerCare (Medicaid), and those who are low income will not be charged for the vaccine.

The Centers for Disease Control encourage everyone over the age of six months to get the flu vaccine this season. Some people don’t get the vaccination because they believe that they will catch the flu from the shot. While some people do experience soreness around the injection site, it is not possible to actually catch the flu from the shot because a dead virus is used. It is possible to get a mild form of the flu from the nasal spray because that vaccine uses a live virus. The spray is only recommended for healthy persons for this reason.

Some people may be concerned about the preservative thimerosal that is found in many vaccines. The amount of preservative is relatively small and is well diluted in the vaccine. Those who are still concerned may request a single dose vaccine which does not contain a preservative. Preservatives are necessary to keep multi-dose vaccines safe and effective.

Individuals who are allergic to eggs or who have previously had an adverse reaction to a flu vaccine should not get the flu shot. Those who have a chronic health condition such as asthma or diabetes are strongly encouraged to get one.

You may also contact your regular health care provider to find out when he/she will have the vaccine available and what the cost might be. Insurance may cover the cost if the vaccine is given in conjunction with a regularly scheduled appointment or for a nurse visit.

Oklahoma City County vaccination clinic hours are:
- Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday—7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday—8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Friday—8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
When Your Backpack is a Pain in Your Back

According to a recent Boston University study, about 85% of American college students report having some type of backpack related pain and discomfort. While most students seem to be aware of the dangers of carrying a backpack incorrectly or with too much weight, a majority do this anyway. This may be especially true on campuses like OCCC where students commute to school just to attend class and try to minimize the number of trips they must make to their cars.

According to the study’s authors, a loaded backpack shouldn’t weigh more than 10 to 15 percent of a student’s body weight. For example, a student who weighs 100 pounds shouldn’t carry a backpack weighing more than 15 pounds.

To minimize the risks associated with carrying a pack that’s too heavy, only pack those items that are essential. If you don’t need every book for every class, leave the non-essential ones at home or in the car.

Bring water bottle to campus empty and fill them up with water right before class.

If possible, schedule your classes so that you have a break between some of your classes. This will give you time to go to your car and switch out materials between classes.

Don’t Let the Bed Bugs Bite

Once upon a time, the expression, "Don’t let the bed bugs bite," was just a common way of wishing someone a good night of sleep. As is true of many household pests, many of us assumed that we had pretty much won the battle against them.

Unfortunately, bed bug infestations are on the rise all across America. Some experts suggest that many people are assuming that they have a bed bug problem because the media have focused on bed bugs in recent years. Others suggest that the problem is real, and that the increase in infestations is due to a combination of factors. For one, these nasty little animals have developed a resistance to the pesticides that have been used to keep insects at bay in our homes and businesses. In addition, Americans travel more than ever, a behavior that increases the chance of transporting bed bugs from place to place.

Bed bugs are resourceful creatures that can live in any articles of furniture, bedding, or clothing. They are also attracted to boxes, papers, and suitcases, so they can easily stow away and get transported long distances to set up residence in another location.

so tiny that it is difficult to see them unless they have just gorged on blood. This makes them larger and red in color so they are easier to see. They are also very crafty and hide well when you are looking for them. Usually it takes an exterminator who is trained to look for and eradicate bed bugs in order to get rid of them.

When traveling, it is wise to thoroughly inspect your room before unpacking. Look for tiny red or brown specks on the sheets as these might be evidence that the bugs have fed on someone. Check behind picture frames and around headboards and any place that a small insect might hide.

The cost and quality of the hotel is not an indicator of whether bed bugs reside in the rooms, so one shouldn’t assume that the bugs won’t be a problem in more couture surroundings.

Thoroughly clean and treat any used clothing or furniture before you bring it into your home. Avoid keeping empty boxes or papers around your house.

If there is an upside to the rise in bed bug problems, it is that there is no conclusive evidence to link bed bug bites to infectious diseases. Still, it’s better to sleep without the fear that the bed bugs might bite.
Get a Text, Have a Healthy Baby

If you or someone you know is expecting a baby, you or she can sign up for a new program from the Centers for Disease Control. Text4baby is a free service that allows women to receive three free text messages each week providing tips for having a healthy pregnancy and for the baby’s first year.

To sign up, text BABY, or BEBE for Spanish, to 511411. Signing up is free and the messages are free. You can also find out more or sign up by going online to http://www.text4baby.org.

The service is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition and an outreach partner through the Department of Health and Human Services.

The messages, which are timed to the woman’s due date or to the baby’s date of birth, provide helpful tips about nutrition, the prevention of birth defects, immunizations, mental health, oral health, and safe sleep.

Text4baby can also be found on Facebook (www.facebook.com/text4baby)

The more information women have for having and raising healthy babies, the better off everyone is. Sign up today and get the support you may need to have a healthy child.

Fall Into Fitness

The offices of Student Support Services and Recreation and Fitness encourage OCCC students to “Fall into Fitness.” Students who engage in regular physical activity enjoy a variety of benefits from that activity. Finding the kind of exercise that really fits your needs can be fun. It can also connect you to others who enjoy the same kinds of activities.

Regular exercise is a natural stress buster. Physical activity brings down harmful adrenaline and cortisol levels. It helps relax and rejuvenate the body and the mind.

Exercise also increases our levels of fitness and flexibility. We burn more calories, look and feel better, and our clothes fit us better.

Recreation and Fitness offers a variety of activities that you might enjoy. On the free side of things (Who doesn’t love free!) are the gym and weight room area. Students may use any of these facilities and equipment free of charge as long as they have their OCCC student ID.

There are also fitness classes and Intramural sports that students may participate in for a fee.

We want our students to be healthier and more fit, so we encourage you to use the facilities each week. For the fall semester, each time you use the fitness area, attend a class, or participate in intramurals, you will be entered into a drawing for weekly prizes such as water bottles and insulated lunch bags. Monthly prizes include travel exercise kits and t-shirts. At the end of the semester, students who have participated will be eligible to win one of two $50 gift cards from Wal-Mart.

The more times a student uses the facility and participates, the more tickets he/she has entered into each drawing. While some students are already physically fit and active, not everyone is. Our goal is to increase awareness of the Recreation and Fitness area and of health issues in general. We understand that not everyone wants to be competitive, and some students won’t participate if they believe they have to compete against those who are more athletic. However, the student who goes back to walk on the treadmill has as much of a chance to win as the student who trains competitively.

So get your motor running and sign up today!
Student Support Services houses a variety of services designed to enhance the performance and well-being of students at Oklahoma City Community College.

- Services to Students with Disabilities, including providing accommodations for documented disabilities, interpreting and captioning services for deaf and hard of hearing students, and assistive technology.
- Professional counseling by a licensed provider.
- Learning support specialist to assist with academic needs such as learning styles, study skills, test-taking, and general health and wellness issues.
- TRIO Grant Programs (Upward Bound and Trio Student Support Services) designed to help first generation college students learn more about college before they arrive and how to be more successful once they are here.

For more information about our services and how to access them, please visit our website at http://www.occc.edu/support/ or call us at 682-7520. We are located on the first floor of the Main Building near SEM Entry 3.

**Sautéed Zucchini with Lemon-Thyme Chicken**

- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 pound chicken cutlets
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup uncooked couscous (use whole wheat couscous to add a few extra grams of fiber)
- 3/4 pound zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/2 pound yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/4 cup fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- Chopped fresh thyme, for garnish

1. Place the lemon zest and thyme in a small bowl and toss. Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper on both sides. Sprinkle half of the lemon and thyme mixture evenly on one side of each cutlet. Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat; cook the chicken, herb side down, turning after 2 minutes. When the chicken is golden and cooked through (about 4 minutes), transfer to a cutting board. Cover chicken and keep warm.

2. Bring 1/2 cup water to a boil in a small saucepan; gradually stir in couscous. Remove pan from heat; cover and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Cover couscous and keep warm.

3. Sauté the zucchini and squash in the same skillet used for the chicken over medium heat, stirring frequently, until golden and tender (about 4 minutes). Stir in the remaining lemon-and-thyme mixture, chicken broth, and couscous.

4. Spoon the couscous mixture evenly among 4 plates; top each with a chicken cutlet. Garnish with thyme.

Per Serving:
- 233 calories
- 7 grams total fat
- 27 grams protein
- 16 grams carbohydrates
- 2 grams fiber
- 63 milligrams cholesterol
- 2 milligrams iron
- 130 milligrams sodium
- 42 milligrams calcium