

PRACTICAL PEARLS: Diagnosis and Management of the Flu

INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Febrile, systemic respiratory viral illnesses peak in mid to late winter• Vaccine composition of strains may change from year to year predicted by experts worldwide• Promote influenza vaccination for patients, families, and health care workers in your offices: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season-2015-2016.htm
INITIAL EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT BY PRIMARY CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diagnosis is based on clinical symptoms during the late fall-winter and can be confirmed by rapid nasal swab PCR testing• Assess for dehydration, secondary bacterial infections such as pneumonias• Youngest and oldest ages susceptible to more severe disease, hospitalizations and complications, therefore oseltamivir treatment should be considered for those at high risk (e.g., <2 years, 65 and older, pregnant women, and certain medical conditions) and those who are very sick (e.g. hospitalization)
WHEN TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions about who should receive influenza antivirals for treatment or seasonal prophylaxis• Concern for severe infection or bacterial superinfection, especially in immunocompromised patients
HOW TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 794-KIDS – Request Pediatric Infectious Diseases appointments• For more urgent access, please call the Pedi ID doctor on call
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM BAYSTATE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL VISIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current patient information and pertinent medical records from the primary care office will be requested prior to the visit for review• Due to the nature of some patients' symptoms, other referrals or possible inpatient admission for additional evaluation and treatment may be recommended

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