

New visitor rules in place to prevent spread of flu

Restrictions in effect Dec. 1 at all hospitals

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PHOENIX (Nov. 30, 2017) – In anticipation of a potentially severe flu season, Banner Health will implement visitor restrictions at all of its hospitals, effective Dec. 1.

“*We are seeing an increase in flu activity earlier than we did last year, leading us to believe this season may be more severe than the past few*”

The following restrictions will be in effect:

- Do not visit the hospital if you have a fever, cough, vomiting or diarrhea.
- Please, no visitors under the age of 13.
 - Siblings, who do not have cold and flu symptoms, may visit a new baby on the Obstetrics unit or Pediatric unit. Your child may be screened for illness by staff before being allowed to visit.
- Children 12 and under must be supervised by an adult at all times in public waiting areas and cafeterias.
- Please wash or sanitize your hands frequently while at the hospital.

“We are seeing an increase in flu activity earlier than we did last year, leading us to believe this season may be more severe than the past few,” said Joan Ivaska, Banner’s senior director of Infection Prevention. “It is always difficult to predict what kind of flu season we will have but so far the flu strains that we have seen circulating have been primarily those included in the vaccine.”

All Banner Health employees, employed physicians, volunteers and students received a flu vaccination by Dec. 1. Those who were unable to receive the vaccination because of medical or religious reasons are required to wear a mask while in care settings (such as hospitals) during the flu season.

Banner Health encourages everyone over the age of six months to receive the flu vaccine to protect themselves and others from influenza. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for protection to set in, making now the perfect time to get vaccinated.

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 28 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit www.BannerHealth.com.