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## Ask-a-Provider: Ramesis Bacolod on Flu

Ask-a-Provider is an occasional feature that highlights timely questions-and-answers with Asante health-care providers.



[Ramesis Bacolod, MD](#), began practicing this year at Asante Physician Partners-Family Medicine in Grants Pass. He earned his medical degree from Cebu Institute of Medicine in Cebu City, Philippines. He completed his internship at Camp Lapu-Lapu Army Station Hospital in Cebu City and his family medicine residency at Altru Family Medicine Residency in Grand Forks, North Dakota. He is board-certified in family medicine and a member of American Academy of Family Physicians.

Dr. Bacolod has special interests in infant, child and adolescent medicine; adult and geriatric medicine; and sports medicine. He enjoys hiking, kayaking, biking and photography.

**Q: What is the most effective way to protect myself and my family from catching the flu this winter?**

**A:** Ask anybody who's had influenza, and they'll tell you it's an awful experience. Fever, headache, chills, muscle aches, and fatigue are just some of the common symptoms suffered by thousands of flu victims every year. Fortunately, you can follow basic precautions to prevent getting or spreading the flu.

The single best way to prevent influenza is to get a flu shot. It's a safe and effective option for most people ages six months and older. Protection develops up to two weeks after getting the shot and lasts for as long as one year. The sooner you get your flu shot, the sooner your body will build immunities that will last throughout the flu season.

**Q: Are there other measures I can take to avoid the flu?**

**A:** Good hygiene habits are the key to keeping flu at bay. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. (And sneeze into a tissue, please! Then promptly throw it away.) When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs are spread this way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people, especially those with a fever. If you are sick with flu-like symptoms, do not go to work, school or other public places. Except to get medical care, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine. Keep away from others as much as possible to avoid making them sick.

**Q: Is it necessary for me to see my doctor if I develop flu symptoms?**

**A:** If you suspect you have the flu, it's a good idea to see your primary care provider right away so he or she can test for the influenza virus and prescribe an antiviral medication such as Tamiflu. If

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taken within 12 to 48 hours from the onset of flu symptoms, antivirals can stop the flu from spreading throughout your body and shorten the duration of your misery. Antivirals can also reduce your chances of developing complications such as pneumonia.

For more information about the flu vaccine and when to call your doctor about flu-like symptoms or complications, visit the [Oregon Health Authority's flu prevention web page](#).

The theme of this year's flu shot campaign for Asante employees is "Get Your Dot On!" – and [it offers incentives for employees](#) who display proof of their immunization by attaching a "red dot" ring to their identification badges. Employees who receive flu shots are given small silicone bands – adorned with red dots – that fit just above their badges, on either lanyards or badge reels.

***Dr. Bacolod practices with Asante Physician Partners-Family Medicine at 700 SW Ramsey Ave., Suite 101, in Grants Pass. To schedule an appointment, call (541) 507-2080. To welcome Dr. Bacolod to Asante, email him at [Ramesis.Bacolod@asante.org](mailto:Ramesis.Bacolod@asante.org).***

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