

# carenotes

## H1N1 and You

Henderson & Walton has a limited supply of the H1N1 (Swine Flu) vaccine. If you are pregnant, we strongly recommend that you get the vaccination as soon as possible.



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The following information comes from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website:

### **What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?**

The symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus in people include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including

2009 H1N1 and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Severe illnesses and deaths have occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

### **How severe is illness associated with 2009 H1N1 flu virus?**

Illness with 2009 H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people who have been sick have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and deaths from infection with this virus have occurred.

In seasonal flu, certain people are at “high risk” of serious complications. This includes people 65 years and older, children younger than five years old, pregnant women, and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions. About 70 percent of people who have been hospitalized with this 2009 H1N1 virus have had one or more medical conditions previously recognized as placing people at “high risk” of serious seasonal flu-related complications. This includes pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.

Young children are also at high risk of serious complications from 2009 H1N1, just as they are from seasonal flu. And while people 65 and older are the least likely to be infected with 2009 H1N1 flu, if they get sick, they are also at “high risk” of developing serious complications from their illness.

CDC laboratory studies have shown that no children and very few adults younger than 60 years old have existing antibody to 2009 H1N1 flu virus; however, about

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### **The Physicians of Henderson & Walton Women’s Center, P.C.**

- Philip Walton, M.D.
- Frank Page, M.D.
- Charles Hudson, M.D.
- Jeffrey Gunnells, M.D.
- Carol Swindle, M.D.
- Cynthia Lassiter, M.D.
- Brenda Taylor, M.D.
- Elizabeth Snowden, M.D.
- John Edwards, M.D.
- Cynthia Jones, M.D.
- George McGrady, M.D.
- Ernest Moore, M.D.
- Dan Hudson, M.D.
- Alison Heaton, M.D.
- Kathleen Ingram, M.D.
- John Woods, M.D.
- William Hudson, M.D.
- Cary Crowe, M.D.

806 St. Vincent’s Drive  
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## A New Year Brings a New Office in Rainbow City

We are excited to announce that our Rainbow City / Gadsden satellite office will be relocating in early 2010. The new office will be located in the Rainbow Station office building across the street from the library. Our new address will be 3731 Rainbow Drive, Suite D, Rainbow City, AL 35906. Our phone number will remain the same: (256) 442-7740.

For more information and updates relating to our move, please visit our website at [www.hwwc.net](http://www.hwwc.net). Should you have any questions, please feel free to call the Rainbow City office at (256) 442-7740.



**Dr. Snowden**



**Dr. Gunnells**



**Dr. Crowe**

If you would like to schedule an appointment in Rainbow City with Dr. Elizabeth Snowden, Dr. Jeffrey Gunnells or Dr. Cary Crowe, please call us at (256) 442-7740.



## Dr. Gunnells Among First to Offer New “Elevate” Prolapse Repair Surgery

Dr. Jeffrey Gunnells is among the first gynecologists in the Birmingham area to offer women the new *Elevate* minimally invasive prolapse repair system, which helps restore anatomy to its normal position with just a single incision.

Prolapse is a condition that affects over 34 million women worldwide. It occurs when muscles and ligaments have been weakened or damaged due to childbirth, previous surgery, hysterectomy, obesity, age, ethnicity, genetics, or repetitive straining. This may cause pelvic structures such as the bladder or rectum to protrude or herniated into the vaginal wall. As a result, women may feel a bulge or sense of

heaviness or the sensation that something has “fallen” in the pelvic area. *Elevate* allows for a minimally invasive and comprehensive solution to treat these defects. “*Elevate’s* attachment to the sacrospinous ligament allows very good support of the vaginal apex with a single incision approach. Pelvic relaxation can be very troubling for patients and *Elevate* gives us another good surgical option to improve quality of life and avoid complicated abdominal procedures,” says Dr. Jeffrey Gunnells.

*Elevate* is the latest innovation of prolapse solutions manufactured by American Medical Systems (AMS), a worldwide leader in women’s pelvic health solutions. *Elevate* utilizes self-fixating tips that allow for a safe, simple, and precise mesh placement in proven anatomical landmarks, through a single vaginal incision. The single incision also promotes a short procedure time and has the potential for a reduced recovery time for the patient. *Elevate* incorporates proven mesh that has been used in more than 100,000 procedures.



**Dr. Jeffrey Gunnells**

A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Dr. Gunnells grew up in Alabama and received his Medical Degree from the University of Alabama School of Medicine. He completed his residency training at the University of South Alabama Medical Center.



elevate®

## Race for the Cure

On October 10, 2009, Henderson & Walton Women's Center, P.C. associates and physicians walked—along with many of our patients—in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in downtown Birmingham.



*Henderson & Walton physicians, associates, patients and friends participated in this year's Race for the Cure.*

In spite of the drizzling rain, more than 14,000 men, women and children gathered to raise breast cancer awareness. Some walked in memory of a loved one or friend who had lost their fight with breast cancer, but many walked in celebration of those who have overcome this disease or are winning the battle.

Henderson & Walton has participated in this event for the past several years and each year is a different experience. You certainly don't leave without being encouraged and humbled by the number of people who take a few hours out of their day to do something good for others and support such a worthy cause.

Every 68 seconds, somewhere around the world, a person succumbs to breast cancer. Early detection is very important. Perform monthly self-breast exams and make sure to get your baseline mammogram at age 35. You should get an annual mammogram every year after age 40 and have a clinical breast exam every year.

We are looking forward to participating in the Race for the Cure in 2010 and hope that you will join us!

## HWWC Satellite Office Locations

We know that for some of you, it's a hassle to come to Birmingham. That's why we bring medical care to you! Our satellite offices are open Monday through Thursday 8am–5pm. You can see one of our physicians at an office near you!

### Alabaster

Dr. Bill Hudson - Tuesday  
Dr. Charles Hudson - Wednesday  
Dr. Elizabeth Snowden - Thursday

### Anniston

Dr. Dan Hudson - Tuesday

### Cullman

Dr. Cindy Lassiter - Monday  
Dr. Alison Heaton - Tuesday

### Jasper

Dr. John Edwards - Monday  
Dr. Carol Swindle - Thursday

### Rainbow City / Gadsden

Dr. Elizabeth Snowden - Monday  
Dr. Jeff Gunnells - Tuesday  
Dr. Cary Crowe - Wednesday

### Sylacauga

Dr. George McGrady - Tuesday  
Dr. Cindy Jones - Wednesday

### Tuscaloosa

Dr. Kathleen Ingram - Monday  
Dr. John Woods - Wednesday

To learn more, visit [www.hwwc.net](http://www.hwwc.net).

## HENDERSON & WALTON WOMEN'S CENTER, P.C.

### St. Vincent's Women's & Children's Center

806 St. Vincent's Drive  
Suite 500  
Birmingham, AL 35205  
(205) 930-1800  
1 (800) 264-1075

1525 Leighton Avenue  
Suite A  
Anniston, AL 36201  
(256) 236-7541

1240 1st Street North  
Suite 110  
Alabaster, AL 35007  
(205) 663-0013

111 4th Avenue, N.E.  
Cullman, AL 35055  
(256) 737-9306

105 Church Street  
Suite A  
Gadsden, AL 35906  
(256) 442-7740

1009 7th Avenue  
Jasper, AL 35501  
(205) 221-4221

9 South Western Avenue  
Sylacauga, AL 35150  
(256) 249-4032

500 Towncenter Blvd  
Suite C  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35406  
(205) 344-5314



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one-third of adults older than 60 may have antibodies against this virus. It is unknown how much, if any, protection may be afforded against 2009 H1N1 flu by any existing antibody.

### **How does 2009 H1N1 flu compare to seasonal flu in terms of its severity and infection rates?**

With seasonal flu, we know that seasons vary in terms of timing, duration and severity. Seasonal influenza can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Each year, in the United States, on average 36,000 people die from flu-related complications and more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related causes. Of those hospitalized, 20,000 are children younger than 5 years old. Over 90% of deaths and about 60 percent of hospitalization occur in people older than 65.

When the 2009 H1N1 outbreak was first detected in mid-April 2009, CDC began

tion analyzed by CDC supports the conclusion that 2009 H1N1 flu has caused greater disease burden in people younger than 25 years of age than older people. At this time, there are relatively fewer cases and deaths reported in people 65 years and older, which is unusual when compared with seasonal flu. However, pregnancy and other previously recognized high risk medical conditions from seasonal influenza appear to be associated with increased risk of complications from this 2009 H1N1. These underlying conditions include asthma, diabetes, suppressed immune systems, heart disease, kidney disease, neurocognitive and neuromuscular disorders and pregnancy.

### **How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?**

People infected with seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with the new H1N1 virus.

### **What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?**

This season, there is a seasonal flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu viruses and a 2009 H1N1 vaccine to protect against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus (sometimes called “swine flu”). A flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu infection.

There are also everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the flu.

### **Everyday steps to protect your health:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at

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working with states to collect, compile and analyze information regarding the 2009 H1N1 flu outbreak, including the numbers of confirmed and probable cases and the ages of these people. The informa-



## **H1N1 and You** (continued from page 4)

least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

### **Other important actions you can take:**

- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs (for when soap and water are not available), tissues and other related items could help you to avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

### **What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?**

If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)

Keep away from others as much as possible. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

### **If I have a family member at home who is sick with 2009 H1N1 flu, should I go to work?**

Employees who are well but who have an ill family member at home with 2009 H1N1 flu can go to work as usual. These employees should monitor their health every day, and take everyday precautions including covering their coughs and sneezes and washing their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, they should use an alcohol-based hand rub. If they become ill, they should notify their supervisor and stay home. Employees who have an underlying

medical condition or who are pregnant should call their health care provider for advice, because they might need to receive influenza antiviral drugs.

### **What is the best technique for washing my hands to avoid getting the flu?**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. CDC recommends that when you wash your hands (with soap and warm water) that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

### **What should I do if I get sick?**

For information about what to do if you get sick with flu-like symptoms this season, click here for a downloadable flyer from the CDC: [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/what\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_get\\_sick.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/what_to_do_if_you_get_sick.pdf).

### **What are “emergency warning signs” that should signal anyone to seek medical care urgently?**

In children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Should you have any questions or feel you may have been exposed to the H1N1 virus, please talk to your doctor. 🍷

