

# Central California Pediatrics

Specialty information for physicians who treat children and expectant mothers.

Children's Hospital  
Central California 

Amazing People. Incredible Care.

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## Managing pediatric flu in the emergency department.

Every year predicting the severity of the influenza season involves a lot of guesswork – but we know from experience that children with the condition will crowd our emergency departments sometime this winter. However, there are general principles to follow when diagnosing and treating pediatric patients with the flu, including that children with chronic medical problems are most at risk.

Flu season usually runs between October and May. Infection rates are highest among children. Children do not have immunity acquired from past flu seasons and they spread the disease rapidly in schools and daycare centers. Symptoms may last a week or more and parents often seek emergency care because of the severity or duration of symptoms. Influenza can cause a cough, sore throat, headache, fever, chills, muscle aches and fatigue.

The first goal during influenza season is to prevent the spread of the disease. This year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended annual flu vaccines for all age groups, including children age 6 to 18. In addition to protecting children against influenza and its related morbidity and mortality, pediatric vaccination will also likely protect other high-risk persons as children appear to be an important vector of influenza transmission.

Children with chronic medical problems are more likely to suffer complications from the flu or seek emergency care. We need to evaluate these children more closely when they present with flu symptoms. The most common complications are pneumonia and dehydration. Other sources of fever need to be ruled out as well. Signs of pneumonia can be an elevated respiratory rate, decreased oxygen saturation or chest pain. These children with flu and pneumonia will usually require hospitalization.



Death from the flu is very rare in children. It usually occurs in children with severe underlying health issues such as congenital heart disease, asthma or prematurity at birth. These children are very fragile and often require hospitalization to monitor their symptoms.

Generally, uncomplicated pediatric influenza cases do not need antiviral treatment. Treatment will shorten the duration of symptoms but usually needs to be started within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. Treatment options should be discussed with the child's parents.

As the saying goes, "the best defense is a good offense." While most children with the flu will have minor disease, we need to be on the lookout for those who have or could suffer complications to ensure the best care for our patients.

## Physician News

The following board certified pediatric subspecialists and Specialty Medical Group (SMG) members recently joined Children's:

**Marvin Ament, MD**  
**Medical Director,**  
**Pediatric Gastroenterology,**  
**Hepatology and Nutrition**

Dr. Marvin Ament is an international expert in his field, and a founder of the pediatric gastroenterology subspecialty in the U.S. With expertise in the management of intestinal and liver diseases, he comes to us from UCLA, where he served as a distinguished professor of pediatrics at David Geffen School of Medicine and enjoyed a 37-year career.

**Mark Rowe, MD**  
**Pediatric Otolaryngologist**

Dr. Mark Rowe comes to us from Loma Linda Children's Hospital and Loma Linda University, where he served as director of pediatric otolaryngology – head and neck surgery, and associate professor of surgery and residency program director, otolaryngology – head and neck surgery, respectively. His areas of interest include pediatric airway evaluation and reconstruction, and sinus surgery.

**Michael Finch, MD**  
**Pediatric Gastroenterologist**

Dr. Michael Finch provides services at the Hospital's Modesto Pediatric Subspecialty Center, owned and operated by SMG in affiliation with Children's, and at the Hospital's Merced Pediatric Subspecialty Center. With nearly 30 years' experience and a special interest in childhood obesity, he previously served as chief of pediatric gastroenterology at Children's Health Care of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix.

**Michael Hauser, MD**  
**Pediatric Hospitalist**

Dr. Michael Hauser comes to us from Washington, D.C., where he served as CMO at HSC Pediatric Center, a 100 licensed bed pediatric subacute care and rehabilitation hospital. Focused on quality improvement, his research interests include participating in national pediatric studies evaluating bloodstream infections and ventilator associated pneumonia.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## New aircraft transports patients on foggy days.

Equipped with a new fixed-wing Beechcraft King Air C90 twin-turbo prop airplane, we can now transport more sick children from hospitals across the state to Children's – even in the fog.

For more than a decade, Children's has safely transported infants, children and teenagers on Air George, an emergency Bell 407 helicopter provided by Med-Trans Corporation and housed at Children's. With help from the same partner, our expert pediatric and neonatal teams can also provide the same quality and timely care by plane in weather conditions that Air George cannot fly.

"Now when we're socked in with fog we can use the fixed-wing," said Danny Davis, Children's executive director, acute and patient care support. "This service expands excellent pediatric and neonatal care to patients in areas too far to go by ground or who Air George can't reach because of bad weather."

Med-Trans Corporation – a leader in the air medical industry – began stationing the airplane at Fresno Yosemite International Airport on Nov. 1. Our experienced medical teams transport patients around-the-clock in both the "mobile ICU" helicopter and plane

specially configured for neonatal and pediatric patients. Once patients arrive at the airport via the plane, the same teams transport them by ambulance to Children's.

The new plane, which will be available until April 1, 2011, may also lighten the load for Air George, whose annual transports have more than doubled during the past five years.



## Education

### Children's Pediatric Symposium Series

All events held 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free registration includes all symposium materials, continental breakfast, plenary session and lunch.

**Bakersfield** – Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building  
Saturday, November 13, 2010

For a complete list of monthly Medical Education topics, visit [childrenscentralcal.org](http://childrenscentralcal.org). For questions about Medical Education contact Norma Barajas, PhD, at 559.353.7230 or email [nbarajas@childrenscentralcal.org](mailto:nbarajas@childrenscentralcal.org).

### Plan Ahead! Spring 2011 Symposiums:

**San Luis Obispo:** April 2, 2011

@ Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center

**Modesto:** April 16, 2011

@ Memorial Medical Center Health & Education Center

**Madera:** May 14, 2011

@ Children's Hospital Central California

**Bakersfield:** May 21, 2011

Location TBD

## Referring a patient

For urgent referrals, or to transfer a patient, call the Children's Access Center toll free at **866.353.KIDS (5437)**.

Or go online to [childrenscentralcal.org](http://childrenscentralcal.org) for a complete list of physician office numbers and information.

**Direct link:** [www.childrenscentralcal.org/services/medicaloffice/refer](http://www.childrenscentralcal.org/services/medicaloffice/refer)

Outreach Centers:

**Merced Subspecialty Pediatric Center** 209.726.0199

**Modesto Subspecialty Pediatric Center** 209.572.3880



Children's Physician Liaison David Chuhlantseff is available to answer questions or assist you at (559) 353-7229 or emailed at [physicianrelations@childrenscentralcal.org](mailto:physicianrelations@childrenscentralcal.org).