FAMC & FOUNDATION

Fall 2025

A NEWSLETTER FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE

Community Connection

Protect Yourself and Your Community This Flu Season

Written by Karla Hall, Clinic Manager, LPN

As the weather cools and more time is spent indoors, flu season begins to ramp up. The influenza virus can cause mild to severe illness and, in some cases, lead to serious complications—especially in young children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions. Take these simple steps to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Get Your Flu Vaccine The single best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months and older receive a flu shot, unless advised otherwise by a healthcare provider. The vaccine not only lowers your risk of getting sick, but also reduces the severity of illness if you do catch the flu.

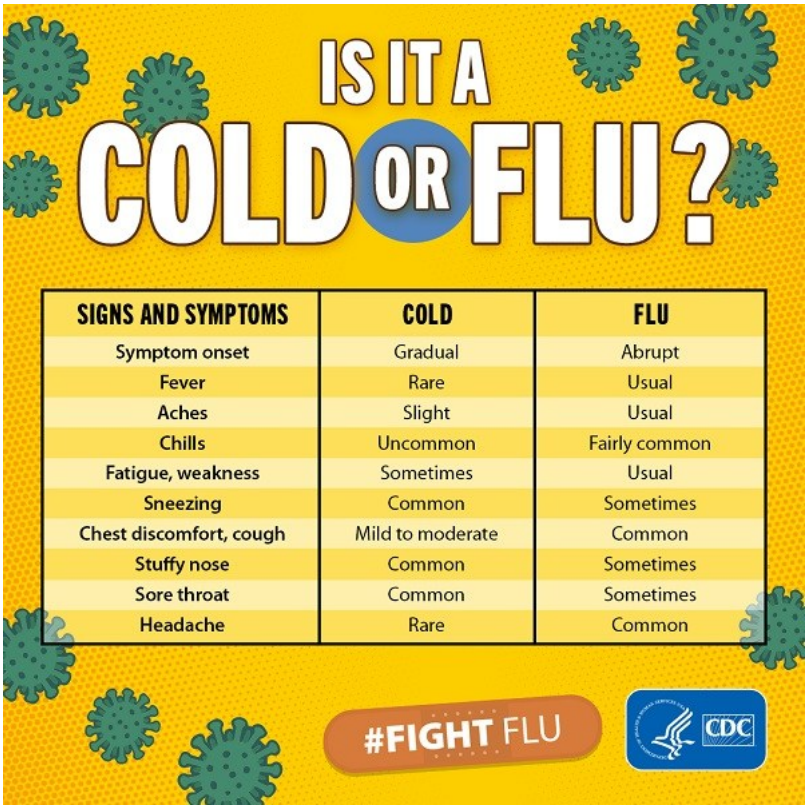
Flu vaccines are available from **Faulkton Area Medical Center** by walk-in or appointment. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop, so early fall is the ideal time to get protected.

Is the Flu Vaccine Safe? Yes. Flu vaccines have been used safely for decades, with hundreds of millions of doses administered. They are carefully tested each year and monitored by multiple safety systems. Common side effects are mild—such as a sore arm, slight fatigue, or low-grade fever—and typically resolve within a day or two. The flu shot cannot give you the flu, since it does not contain a live virus. For most people, the benefits of protection far outweigh the minimal risks.

When Should You Get It? The ideal time to get your flu vaccine is in September or October, before flu activity begins to rise. This ensures your body has enough time—about two weeks—to build protection. Vaccination later in the season is still beneficial, even into winter, especially since flu cases often peak between December and February and can last as late as May. Children who need two doses should get their first shot as soon as possible so they are fully protected before flu season peaks.

Everyday Prevention Tips In addition to getting your flu shot, these healthy habits can help reduce the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow, not your hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home if you're feeling unwell.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces like doorknobs, phones, and light switches.
- Support your immune system with adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, hydration, and regular physical activity.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

September is Sepsis Awareness Month Kelly Baloun, FAMC Quality Director, RN

Each September, Sepsis Awareness Month shines a spotlight on a serious medical condition that claims hundreds of thousands of lives every year. By learning more about sepsis, you can help protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

What is Sepsis?

Sepsis happens when the body overreacts to an infection. Instead of fighting only the infection, the immune system goes into overdrive and begins damaging the body's own tissues and organs. This can quickly lead to organ failure, amputations, or even death.

Sepsis can come from any type of infection—something as common as pneumonia, a urinary tract infection, or even an infected cut. Severe cases, called "septic shock," cause a dangerous drop in blood pressure and can be fatal.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 1.7 million adults in the U.S. develop sepsis each year, and nearly 270,000 die from it. Globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates 49 million people are affected annually, leading to 11 million deaths.

Why Awareness Matters

One of the biggest challenges with sepsis is that it's often misunderstood or overlooked. Early treatment saves lives, but symptoms can be confusing and mistaken for other illnesses.

Know the Warning Signs

Sepsis is a medical emergency. If you or a loved one has an infection and notice any of these symptoms, seek medical care immediately:

- Fever, shivering, or feeling very cold
- Confusion or disorientation
- Rapid heartbeat
- Trouble breathing
- Extreme pain or discomfort

Life After Sepsis

Many people survive sepsis, but it can leave lasting effects. Survivors may face ongoing physical, emotional, or memory challenges. Sepsis Awareness Month also highlights the need for continued support for survivors and their families.

How You Can Help

- Learn the signs and symptoms of sepsis.
- Don't ignore infections—get medical help early.
- Share this information with friends and family.
- Support efforts to improve awareness, prevention, and research.

Together, we can make a difference. Recognizing sepsis early and getting timely treatment can save lives.

HealtheLife

The FAMC Patient Portal.

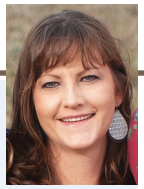
HealtheLife helps individuals and families to stay informed, stay educated, and take a more active role in their health. Through the HealtheLife mobile app, you have real-time and easy access to your health care organization's online portal.

This portal shows your latest health care information and provides services needed to plan, understand, and engage in your care.

Sign up for access with the FAMC Patient Registration team or call 605-598-6262!

Iron is Needed for Academic & Athletic Success

April Sorensen, RDN



Fueling Brain Development & Preventing Anemia in Athletes

Iron is an essential nutrient for both body and mind. For students, iron plays a critical role in brain development, concentration, and learning ability. When iron levels are too low, it can lead to anemia—a condition that causes fatigue, difficulty focusing, and reduced academic and athletic performance. Teenage girls (ages 14-18) and pregnant women are the groups most at risk for iron deficiency. ***1 out of 3 teenage girls have iron deficiency anemia.*** Belonging to this category and also being an athlete increases your risk of anemia by 2-3 times the normal risk.

Iron is key to delivering oxygen to the brain, where it supports energy production and the development of neurotransmitters—chemical messengers that affect learning, memory, and mood. Students with inadequate iron intake often experience trouble concentrating, slower processing speeds, and lower test scores. During growth spurts, the brain's need for iron is even higher, making adequate intake especially important for children, teens, and young adults. School-age children (4—8 years old) need 10mg of iron a day. The need for both boys and girls decrease to 8mg from ages 9—13 but then jump up to 11mg for boys and 15-18mg for girls in their teenage and child-bearing years.

Student-athletes have even greater iron needs. Regular training increases iron loss through sweat, red blood cell breakdown, and, for female athletes, menstrual blood loss. Low iron can make athletes feel tired earlier during games or practices, slow their recovery, and impact their academic focus.

Warning Signs of Low Iron: Students who struggle with persistent fatigue, pale skin, headaches, or difficulty focusing should talk with their healthcare provider. A simple blood test can detect iron deficiency, and a registered dietitian can help develop a personalized nutrition plan to restore levels.

Getting enough iron requires a well-balanced diet and the right timing. Eating right is the best way to protect brain health and maintain energy levels. Animal-based sources like lean beef, pork, lamb (a.k.a. red-meats) provide the most easily absorbed form of iron (heme iron). Plant-based sources—seeds, beans, lentils, tofu, spinach, and fortified cereals—are excellent sources too but a bit harder to absorb. Pair these with foods high in vitamin C (like strawberries, oranges, or bell peppers) to improve absorption.

Too much calcium intake can block iron absorption, so be mindful of how much milk and or dairy you consume with your high iron foods. Compounds in coffee, tea, and red wine can also reduce iron absorption by up to 60-90% when consumed with meals. Medications that reduce stomach acid can also interfere with iron absorption—specifically antacids and proton pump inhibitors—stomach acid is necessary for iron absorption. A general recommendation is to space these things out at least 1-2 hours before or after eating iron-rich foods.

The Bottom Line: Iron isn't just for strong muscles—it fuels the brain. For students and student-athletes, maintaining healthy iron levels can mean better classroom performance, improved concentration, and stronger athletic endurance. Focusing on iron-rich foods can help set students up for success both on the field and in the classroom.

Iron-Rich Snacks for Students

- Lean Beef Jerky (watch the salt content)
- Trail mix with nuts, pumpkin seeds & dried apricots. Pumpkin seeds have 2-3mg per 1/4 cup.
- Hummus with veggie sticks (like bell peppers and broccoli)
- Roast Beef or Turkey Roll-ups—lean meat wrapped around raw veggies.
- Hard-boiled eggs paired with a piece of fruit
- Fortified whole-grain cereal
- Protein balls made with oats, peanut butter, honey, chia or flax seed.
- Tuna Salad on Crackers
- Apple Slices and peanut-butter
- Edamame (Steamed Soybeans)

Radiology Services at FAMC by Gin Bray, Director of Radiology

Has your doctor ordered imaging studies for you, and you thought, "it sure would be nice to not have to make another trip out of town to have this test done." The good news is you don't have to. Faulkton Area Medical Center offers a wide range of testing options right here in Faulkton.

FAMC recently upgraded their radiography machine for general x-ray. This update was completed in June 2025. The machine offers improved digital imaging capabilities and has allowed FAMC radiology staff to stay on top of the changes in technology for radiology.

We also installed an in-house MRI machine in April 2023. Our 1.5T GE Voyageur offers state-of-the-art air coils which offer the patient a better experience and a more comfortable scan. The coils truly conform to the body like a blanket providing improved patient comfort and decreased scan times. The magnet itself has a larger bore, resulting in increased patient comfort for larger patients and those who are claustrophobic.

In 2021, we upgraded our CT scanner to a GE Revolution Maxima. This machine also has quick scan times and a larger bore. Our CT scanner utilizes artificial intelligence, offers a metal artifact reduction feature, and most importantly provides a lower dose of radiation to our patients without taking away from detail of the imaging.

FAMC Radiology also offers mobile ultrasound biweekly, echo once a week, 3D screening mammography monthly, nuclear medicine monthly and dexa scans monthly.

If your provider orders one of these exams, you can have it done in Faulkton. Our radiology team handles scheduling outside orders on a daily basis. To schedule, our team needs a provider's order and preauthorization from your insurance which is completed by the ordering facility. FAMC is able to offer next day or even same day scheduling for most in house exams. Don't hesitate to request your exam to be completed at FAMC. If there are any questions regarding the scheduling process, contact Gin Bray, Director of Radiology at FAMC, at 605-598-6262.

Notice of Service Termination—Peregrine Health Services

Due to internal restructuring within the IHC/Peregrine Health organization, the agreement between Peregrine Health and Faulkton Area Medical Center (FAMC) will be terminated.

Since 2022, Peregrine Health has provided comprehensive behavioral health services to our patients, with Angela Braaten, LCSW, serving as our dedicated provider.

As a result, all services provided through Peregrine Health will officially conclude on **October 10, 2025**.

FAMC is sincerely grateful for the partnership we had with Peregrine Health and deeply appreciate the quality care they have provided to our patients and community.

FAMC is actively working to identify a new partner organization to ensure uninterrupted access to behavioral health services for our patients. Watch the Faulk County Record and the FAMC Social Media sites— Facebook and Instagram for updates. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Celebrating a Legacy of Chiropractic Care in Faulkton Dr. John Carr

Kelsey Kalkman, Dr. John Carr, Darla Warkenthien

For more than 30 years, Dr. John Carr has been a dedicated pillar of the healthcare community in Faulkton. His longstanding commitment and service have made a lasting impact on the well-being of residents across the region.

Dr. Carr is a respected and influential figure in the field of chiropractic care, known for his compassionate approach and wide range of treatment options. Through the Carr Clinic, Dr. Carr provides essential services to the Faulkton area, including chiropractic care, acupuncture, cupping, laser therapy, radiology services, and custom orthotics.

Patients can count on Dr. Carr or a member of the Carr Clinic team to be in Faulkton weekly, most often on Thursdays—continuing a tradition of trusted, high-quality care close to home.

FAMC is grateful for Dr. Carr's unwavering commitment to our community and appreciates his continued years of service. To schedule an appointment with the Carr Chiropractic Clinic, call 605-853-2230.

The Benefits of Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic care is a natural, non-invasive approach to health that focuses on diagnosing and treating musculoskeletal issues, particularly those involving the spine. Chiropractors use hands-on adjustments to realign the spine and joints, helping to restore mobility, reduce pain, and support the body's natural healing processes.

One of the most common reasons people seek chiropractic care is pain relief. Adjustments can relieve pressure on nerves and reduce inflammation, improving comfort and function. Unlike medications, chiropractic care addresses the root cause of pain rather than simply masking symptoms.

Chiropractic care also helps improve posture and flexibility. Poor posture from prolonged sitting or repetitive movements can strain the spine and muscles. Regular adjustments, combined with stretching and strengthening exercises, encourage proper alignment and reduce the risk of future injuries.

Beyond pain management, many patients report improved energy levels, better sleep, reduced stress, and an overall sense of well-being. By supporting healthy nervous system function, chiropractic care can positively impact your overall health.

Dr. John Carr with some of the staff at FAMC

Welcome to FAMC Alison Winter, Speech & Language Pathologist

FAMC is thrilled to welcome Alison Winter, SLP, to the FAMC Therapy team!

Some of you may already be familiar with Alison as she has provided speech contract services at FAMC for a number of years. Alison started her full-time Speech Pathologist position with FAMC in June and will be working with patients here and students at the Faulkton Area School.

Alison received her Bachelor of Science degree in Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences from Minnesota State University, Moorhead in 2010. She completed her Master of Arts degree at USD in 2012. She is currently licensed in the state of South Dakota and holds a certificate in Clinical Competence with the American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association.

Speech pathologists play a vital role in empowering individuals—whether it's overcoming speech challenges, improving language skills, working with swallow and chewing issues, or fostering confidence in communication. Alison's skills and commitment to patient care make her a fantastic addition to FAMC.

Lymphedema and Lymphatic Disorders Now Treated at FAMC!

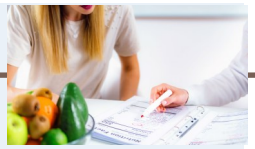
We're thrilled to announce that Jennifer Bauer, PT, CLT has officially earned her Certified Lymphedema Therapist (CLT) credential — and with it, FAMC will offer specialized lymphedema therapy as a new service.

Becoming a CLT is no small feat. This certification requires completing over 135 hours of intensive training in complete decongestive therapy (CDT) — including manual lymphatic drainage, compression techniques, exercise, and skin care — followed by a comprehensive certification exam. CLTs are uniquely qualified to assess and treat lymphedema and other lymphatic disorders, providing vital care for patients recovering from cancer treatments, surgery, or chronic conditions.

Jennifer's dedication to her profession and her patients is inspiring, and we're so proud to now offer this advanced service at FAMC thanks to her hard work and commitment.

Jennifer is accepting new patients! If you or a loved one are experiencing signs of lymphedema, talk to your provider about starting therapy today.

Medicare Coverage for Weight Loss Counseling



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) initiated coverage of intensive behavioral therapy (IBT) for obesity in 2011, providing patients with up to 22 nutrition counseling sessions in a 12 month period with no out of pocket pay.

IBT consists of weekly nutrition consults with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) for the first month, bi-weekly consults for months 2-6 and if you are making appropriate progress with your weight loss, you can continue seeing the RDN once a month for the remainder of the calendar year.

FAMC has had significant success with this program and many individuals who have gone through the program report feeling better, have more energy, sleep better and have kept the weight off.

If you have a Body Mass Index (BMI) above 30 and you are covered by Medicare—you qualify! A few other insurance companies cover IBT, but rules may vary so it is best to check your insurance coverage.

To get started, a referral is needed from your primary care provider and then patient registration will get you on the schedule to see the RDN.

As an added benefit, the RDN will address any nutrition related issues you may have while you are in the program. This includes but is not limited to: high cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes, food intolerances, and more.

If you have questions about IBT for Obesity—you can contact **April Sorensen, RDN at 605-598-6262 ext 1147.**

Join the FAMC Talent Pool

Have you ever considered employment at FAMC and want us to have your information in case a relevant opportunity arises?

Join our Talent Pool. Scan the QR code with your mobile phone, or go to www.faulktonmedical.org and complete the questionnaire.

We're excited to learn more about you and keep your profile in mind for upcoming opportunities that align with your skills, experience, and career goals.

FAMC Foundation News:

SCHOLARSHIP GOAL ACHIEVED!

The Faulkton Area Medical Center Foundation is happy to announce that it has surpassed the goal of raising $250,000 towards our Doctor Scholarship. Currently we have $305,693.31.

This will fulfill the scholarship amount that will be given to the selected recipient. There will be stipulations and different qualifications they will need to provide once we get to the selection and recipient steps.

Overall, we are shooting for a long-term, or indefinite, goal of $1 million to continue to be able to offer this scholarship opportunity here at FAMC to other future MD/DOS our facility needs.

INTERIM COORDINATOR

The FAMC Foundation Board will collectively handle coordination responsibilities and our Foundation Secretary and Treasurer, Blythe Smith, will serve as the primary contact for any Foundation-related inquiries.

We thank Kelly Ortmeier for her dedication and contributions to our mission and welcome her into her new role at the FAMC Patient Registration Desk.

Blythe can be reached at 605-598-1139.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our cause!

Foundation Donations In Memory Of:

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Win Big. Drive Bold. Support Local Care. Win Big Flair!

This Fall, the FAMCF will be selling a limited number of raffle tickets - $100 each - for multiple chances to win GREAT prizes! Below is a teaser of the GRAND PRIZE....

It's red, it's rowdy, it's ready to roam; not built for errands— it's built to leave home.
It's got grit, it's got growl, it's got zero shame; and it's raising funds for a great aim.
No need to guess, no need to stress—just grab a ticket and hope for success!

Visit the Faulkton Area Medical Center Foundation Facebook page for more info!

All proceeds benefit the Faulkton Area Medical Center Foundation general fund!

Faulkton Area Medical Center & Foundation

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OR you may go to www.faulktonmedical.org/giving and donate online!

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Thank you for your support!