

## MANAGING COMMON RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

As we start fall and get into cough and cold season, we thought it would be helpful to share some of the symptoms and ways to manage common respiratory infections.

### **Viral Infections:**

- Common Cold or Flu: lasts 7-14 days
- Acute Pharyngitis (sore throat): lasts 3-7 days
- Acute bronchitis (chest cold): lasts 7-21 days
- Acute sinusitis (sinus infection): lasts 7-14 days
- COVID-19: lasts 5-14 days

### **When you have a viral infection you should:**

- Rest as much as possible
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Wash your hands frequently and stay home
- Take over-the-counter medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) for fever, aches or sore throat

### **If you have access to a COVID-19 rapid test (RAT), please follow the instructions below to test yourself:**

- 1) Insert the swab tip between inner cheek and lower gum and turn the swab a few times. Repeat on the other side.
- 2) Then, rub the swab tip on your tongue and as far back in your throat as is comfortable.
- 3) Tilt your head back and using the same swab, fully insert the swab straight back into your nose until you hit resistance. Rotate several times and let it sit for a few seconds. Repeat on the other side.
- 4) Remove and place swab into the test tube following the kit instructions.

\*If you have COVID-19 and are 70 or older or are immunocompromised please call our office within the first few days of symptoms to discuss possible treatment with Paxlovid.

Antibiotics are not effective in treating viral infections. Antibiotics can cause side effects (e.g. diarrhea, yeast infections) and may cause harms such as severe diarrhea, allergic reactions, kidney or liver injury.

### **Please call our office or the After Hours Clinic for an appointment if:**

- Symptoms are not improving in the above expected time or worsening at any time
- You have a child with a fever for 4 or more days, or at any time with a child 6 months or younger
- You have emphysema or chronic bronchitis, asthma or other underlying medical issues that put you more at risk

At any time if you are having shortness of breath or chest pain, you should go to your nearest Emergency Room.

We encourage everyone to make sure they are up to date with their COVID-19 boosters and to get the flu shot when available.