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**Stay Ahead of Sepsis During Flu Season**

(Macon, GA) – As flu season is heading into peak season, Coliseum Medical Centers and Coliseum Northside Hospital are spreading awareness around sepsis, the body’s overwhelming response to an infection. Viral illnesses such as the flu, can sometimes trigger sepsis. For some, influenza (the flu) can cause pneumonia which is a common cause of sepsis.

Dr. Ralph Griffin, Medical Director of Emergency Medicine at Coliseum Northside Hospital says that sepsis cases rise during flu season and so education is key.

“It is so important that members of our community understand the symptoms of sepsis and the importance of seeking emergency medical help as soon as those symptoms are recognized,” says Griffin.

While low grade fever and mild weakness may occur with any infection, the following symptoms are warning signs of sepsis and should be taken seriously. If someone experiences two or more of these symptoms it is recommended that they seek medical attention.

- Shivering, fever or feeling cold
- Extreme pain or general discomfort (“feeling the worst pain ever”)
- Pale or discolored skin
- Severe sleepiness, difficulty waking or confusion
- “I feel like I might die” feeling
- Shortness of breath

Sepsis can lead to organ dysfunction, amputation, and in extreme cases, death. In most cases, sepsis can be treated with antibiotics, intravenous fluids or medication that increases your blood pressure.

Dr. Griffin says there are several ways to avoid sepsis during flu season. He recommends that everyone receive their flu vaccine as well as the pneumococcal vaccine, when recommended by their doctor. He says it is also important to practice good hand and respiratory hygiene and to stay away from people who are sick. He says that if you do find yourself getting sick, it’s important that you rest and let your body recover.

Coliseum Medical Centers and Coliseum Northside Hospital are both certified by the Joint Commission for sepsis care.

**About Coliseum Health System**

*Owned by HCA Healthcare (HCA), Coliseum Health System is comprised of Coliseum Medical Centers and Coliseum Northside Hospital, two medical/surgical campuses with a total of 413 beds. The hospitals feature an expansive range of state-of-the-art services designed to meet the comprehensive medical needs of central Georgia. Both facilities include a 24-hour emergency room, inpatient and outpatient surgery options,*

rehabilitation programs, and diagnostic services. In addition, Coliseum Health System's breadth of care options includes specialty facilities such as the Coliseum Heart Institute, an advanced cardiac center offering all services from non-invasive cardiology to open heart surgery, Coliseum Primary Stroke Center, Coliseum Orthopaedic & Spine Institute, Coliseum Cancer Institute, Coliseum Robotic Institute, Georgia Bariatric Center, Coliseum Rehabilitation Center, and the Family Ties Birthing Center, which includes a level III neonatal nursery. Additionally, the Coliseum Center for Behavioral Health, located at Coliseum Medical Centers, provides treatment to adults with psychiatric and addiction issues through inpatient and outpatient programs, as well as, a specialty program for senior adults. For more information about Coliseum Health System, visit: <http://coliseumhealthsystem.com>

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