

## How to Manage the Flu this Holiday Season...

(NAPSA)—The holidays are here and the last thing you want to deal with this season is influenza. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as many as one in five Americans contract the flu each year, resulting in more than 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths. For millions, influenza will keep children home from school, parents home from work, put a damper on holiday celebrations and interrupt family vacations. “We anticipate seeing record numbers of patients with influenza again this year,” says Leslie Mihalov, M.D., chief of the ER at Columbus Children’s Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, which saw 450 flu-ridden children a day during a peak last December.

Further complicating this year’s flu season is the scarcity of the influenza vaccine, which can help prevent illness. The CDC estimates that as many as 44 million people will go without a flu vaccine this year. But, even if you can’t get a flu shot this season, there is a flu test available to help you manage the flu.

Although there are no fool-proof ways to avoid catching the flu, health care professionals recommend that you see a physician for an influenza test at the first sign of symptoms—muscle aches, fever, headache, sore throat, runny nose and fatigue.

One test that has gained wide-



spread popularity among physicians is the QuickVue® Influenza test, a fast, painless test that can detect the presence of the influenza virus. The test is simple to administer to both adults and children and can provide results in 10 minutes or less right in the doctor’s office or the emergency room.

Once influenza has been confirmed, a physician can prescribe antiviral drugs that can reduce the severity and duration of influenza and help prevent the spread of the virus to others. Your physician may also prescribe antivirals to members of the family that have been exposed to the virus to help prevent illness. Importantly, people should resist the urge to “ride out” the symptoms, as antivirals must be taken within 48 hours of symptoms to treat the flu.

For more information about influenza or to find a physician in your area offering the QuickVue® Influenza test, visit [www.flutest.com](http://www.flutest.com).