

S. A. F. E. NEWSLETTER

Safety Awareness For Employees

UAMS®

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Ready, Set, Protect.

In Arkansas, the flu season typically runs from October through May, with the highest activity often occurring during the winter months of December through March. Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older each year – and is mandatory for all UAMS personnel. This year's SEHS vaccination clinic will be held on the ground floor in the concourse of ED II beginning on Monday, October 13 and run through Friday, November 21. Appointment can be scheduled through your UAMS MyChart account.

To be fully protected when the season peaks, it's best to get your flu shot in the early fall, ideally before the flu begins to spread significantly. The flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu and its potential severe complications, especially for high-risk individuals including young children, pregnant women, those 65 years and older, and people with chronic health conditions.

In addition to getting your recommended routine immunizations, including a yearly flu vaccine, there are some other ways you can help protect yourself and your loved ones this season:

- Stay home if you're sick to avoid infecting others.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue to avoid spreading germs onto your hands and nearby surfaces.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in your home, office, and school.
- Follow current guidance on use of masks.
- Keep these items on hand when venturing outside of your home: a face mask, tissues, and a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Still not sure if flu vaccination is right for you and your loved ones? Learn more about [flu](#) and related topics like [vaccine safety](#) and [flu vaccine ingredients](#).

Wondering if your symptoms are flu, COVID-19, seasonal allergies, strep throat, RSV, or a common cold? Check out this [comparison chart](#). Wondering when to seek medical attention for flu? Check out these [emergency warning signs](#) of flu in children and adults.



Occupational Health & Safety



501-686-5536



<https://uams.edu/campusopsstaging/depts/ohs/>



Shorter Days, Greater Risks

As summer fades and daylight hours shorten, many workplaces notice a shift in energy and mood among employees. The transition to fall and winter can bring cooler temperatures, earlier sunsets, and changes in daily routines. While these seasonal changes may seem minor, they can have a significant impact on both mental health and physical safety.

Employees may experience fatigue from reduced daylight, changes in sleep patterns, or increased commuting in darkness. Others may struggle with mood changes or even symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Understanding and addressing these seasonal challenges is an important part of keeping teams safe, healthy, and productive.

Human biology is deeply connected to natural light. Reduced daylight can disrupt circadian rhythms, the body's internal clock that regulates sleep and wake cycles. This disruption can lead to difficulty falling asleep, poor sleep quality, and increased fatigue during waking hours.

Seasonal changes can also affect mood. Some employees may experience mild "winter blues," while others may face more significant challenges. These mood shifts can impact concentration, decision-making, and overall job performance. Fatigue and reduced alertness increase the risk of workplace accidents, particularly in safety-sensitive environments.

Just as with other safety practices, seasonal health awareness should extend to employees' lives outside of work. Reminders about safe winter driving, home lighting for dark evenings, and managing stress during the holiday season all contribute to a well-rounded safety culture.

Protecting a workforce means more than preventing physical injuries; it also means safeguarding mental well-being and ensuring employees have the energy, focus, and resilience to perform at their best year-round.

Safety Awareness For Employees

Fire Prevention

October is Fire Prevention Month! This month we focus on raising awareness about fire safety and prevention to protect homes and families from fire hazards.

It's important that you practice whole home safety, so you and your family are prepared not only this month, but throughout the entire year. Having functioning smoke and carbon monoxide detectors installed throughout your home is a vital piece of fire safety and is your first line of defense. They work around the clock to provide your family with an early alert in the event of an emergency, helping to give you time to safely escape. Smoke and CO alarms should be installed on every level of the home, including the basement, as well as inside and outside each bedroom for whole home detection. Maintain alarms by testing them regularly, changing the batteries every 6 months and replacing alarms at least every 10 years.

Also be prepared with fire extinguishers. These life savers can help stop small fires from causing more damage and should be kept easily accessible on every level of the home, especially in the kitchen and garage. Ensure you know how to operate a fire extinguisher before needing to use one.



Chemical Reconciliation

Are you aware of the chemicals being used or stored in your work area? If you work in a lab space (research, clinical, or educational) that uses chemicals, an inventory, including quantities, must be reviewed and updated annually. This inventory must be provided to the Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) department to ensure regulatory compliance.

Aside from compliance, an accurate inventory helps prevent duplicate or excess orders, tracks chemicals with limited shelf-lives, and makes it easier to locate products when needed. This inventory also helps ensure safe storage practices and aids first responders when addressing spills or other chemical emergencies.

When was the last time a chemical inventory was conducted in your lab? Do you know the hazards these chemicals pose? When is the last time you looked at the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for them?



UAMS Safety is in the process of migrating existing chemical inventories into our chemical inventory and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) program. This program provides access to SDSs as well as easily records incoming and/or consumed chemicals, tracks expiration dates, and categorizes and labels items within a lab specific inventory. Once your laboratory's inventory has been entered into the program, UAMS EH&S will train staff on how to use the program.

Safety Awareness For Employees

OCTOBER

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ALARMS
AWARENESS
CHEMICALS
CIRCADIAN
COMPLIANCE

CULTURE
DAYLIGHT
EXTINGUISHER
FAMILY
FATIGUE

HEALTH
INVENTORY
OCTOBER
PERFORMANCE
PREVENTION

PROTECT
SAFETY
SEASONS
SYMPTOMS
VACCINATION



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