

## **New CDC Guidelines for the Seasonal and Novel H1N1 Flu Virus for the 2009-2010 School Year**

The new CDC guidelines apply to any flu virus circulating during the 2009-2010 school year, not only the 2009 Novel H1N1 flu virus. The new guidelines recognize the need to balance the risks of illness among students and staff with the benefits of keeping students in school. We remain concerned about the spread of flu in schools due to the fact that the largest number of reported cases of the Novel H1N1 virus has been in people between the ages of 5 and 24-years-old. Based on the current flu conditions, the new guidelines recommend students and staff with flu-like illness:

**Stay at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medications such as Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.** (Fever is considered equal or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit). A 7 day absence from school may still be recommended if severe flu conditions develop.

Families, students and school staff can keep from getting sick with flu by remembering the 3 Cs:

- ❖ **CLEAN--Practicing good hand hygiene**—wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds and use a paper towel to dry hands or use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not readily available. **Clean surfaces and items** that are more likely to have frequent hand contact
- ❖ **COVER--Practicing respiratory etiquette**—Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough/sneeze into your elbow not into your hands. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.**
- ❖ **CONTAIN--Staying home if you are sick**—students and staff must take personal responsibility for helping to slow the spread of virus by staying home when they are sick. **Practice social distancing**—avoid crowds and keep distance of a few feet from people who are sick. Early treatment with antiviral medication if recommended for pregnant woman/consult with your physician.
- ❖ **Get vaccinated** when seasonal flu and H1N1 vaccines become available. Initial target groups will include pregnant women, persons who live with or provide care to infants <6 months old, health care and emergency care personnel, persons aged 6 months—24 years of age, persons aged 25-64 who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-relate complications

If you become ill with flu like illness:

- ❖ **Stay home until fever free for at least 24 hours** WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medication
- ❖ **DO NOT give Aspirin** to children as this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's Syndrome
- ❖ **Contact your physician if you or your child have severe symptoms such as:**  
fast breathing/trouble breathing, sleepiness/lethargy, bluish or gray skin color, high fever, severe or persistent vomiting, signs of dehydration such as not urinating or no tears when crying, irritability/confusion  
**OR** if you are pregnant or have a chronic health condition which may put you at higher risk for complications from the flu

Prepare for the flu season by:

- ❖ **UPDATE EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL**
- ❖ Planning for child care at home
- ❖ Planning to monitor the health of the sick child
- ❖ Identify a separate room in your home for care of sick family members
- ❖ Pull together items to entertain your family members while home sick

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