

## H1N1 (Swine Flu)

It appears that the prospect of the H1N1 flu returning this fall is a real possibility. School districts have been asked to remind parents that it is important that children with flu-like symptoms including: fever (over 100degrees F), cough, sore throat, or runny nose should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs. Some additional symptoms that may be experienced with the H1N1 flu include muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

The Center for Disease Control does not recommend closing school as an initial response in preventing the spread of the disease. Students exhibiting flu symptoms will be isolated from other students immediately and their parents will be contacted to pick them up.

If you suspect your child is getting the flu, it is essential that not only does he/she not attend school, but they should also not attend other places such as childcare, the mall, or sporting events- where other people would be exposed to the germs.

It is also important to teach your children how to reduce their risk of getting the flu and protect others from infection.

- Teach your children to wash their hands often. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (that's about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- Teach your children the proper use of hand sanitizer. Gels, rubs, and hand wipes all work well, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Always read and follow label instructions when using hand sanitizer.
- Teach your children to keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve – not your hands!

We receive information on a regular basis from state agencies and local health officials. We will be monitoring this closely and we will keep you informed accordingly.