

# Dealing With the H1N1 Flu

For schools the Flu Season can take a tremendous toll. It is important to take whatever steps necessary to protect ourselves and our students from the Flu Virus.



We all know the symptoms characterized by fever, headache, fatigue, chills, cough, sore throat, and aching muscles; vomiting and diarrhea may occur but are not as common. The Flu Virus is spread from person-to-person by airborne droplets. There are several generally accepted ways to decrease the chances of exposure and catching the Flu.

## Tips for Employees

**IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING FLU SYMPTOMS, STAY AT HOME FOR AT LEAST 7 DAYS EVEN IF SYMPTOMS RESOLVE SOONER.**

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. **If no tissue is available "catch your cold in your elbow" by covering your mouth and nose with the crook of your arm and sneezing into your shirt sleeve.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water.** The important points here are to wash your hands as often as practical, certainly after suspected exposures, and to use soap, rubbing your hand vigorously for 10-15 seconds.
- **Avoid touching public fixtures** such as bathroom door handles and fixtures. Use a paper towel for handling these items, and then dispose of it immediately and properly.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** to prevent exposing yourself to germs picked up from contaminated objects or surfaces.

## Tips for Students



- **Advise parents and students to take flu symptoms seriously. *If students are experiencing flu symptoms, they should be kept at home for at least 7 days EVEN IF SYPTOMS RESOLVE SOONER.***
- **Instruct students to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.** A little "reminder" and perhaps instruction on how to "catch your cold in your elbow" would be timely. Have students immediately and properly dispose of each soiled tissue.
- **Instruct students to wash their hands** regularly with soap and water.
- **Instruct students not to share items that may be contaminated** with saliva such as beverage containers.

**The newest recommendations from the Center for Disease Control released a few hours ago state the following:**

“The CDC recommends the primary means to reduce spread of influenza in schools focus on early identification of ill students and staff, staying home when ill, and good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. Students, faculty or staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home and not attend school or go into the community except to seek medical care for at least 7 days even if symptoms resolve sooner. Students, faculty and staff who appear to have an influenza-like illness at arrival or become ill during the school day should be isolated promptly in a room separate from other students and sent home”.

The CDC is no longer recommending school closure as a means of containing the virus, but is rather focusing on keeping all students and staff members out of schools and childcare facilities during their period of illness.

**Please continue to recommend these guidelines to the parents of students and to staff members who have a temperature of 100<sup>0</sup> and above along with a cough and/or sore throat. They should be encouraged to remain home for a minimum of 7 days.**