

H1N1 Flu and Back-to-School Fact Sheet

- H1N1 is spread from person-to-person much in the same way that seasonal flu spreads through coughing and sneezing of infected individuals. You may also become infected by touching infected surfaces or objects and then touching your mouth or nose
- To date the largest number of cases have occurred in people under the age of 25 years
- Symptoms include: fever greater than 100°F, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue, individuals may also experience vomiting and diarrhea
- Individuals experiencing the symptoms listed above should stay home for at least 24-hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications
- If you are mildly sick with the flu-**Stay Home** and recover
- Emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention in children include: Fast or difficult breathing, bluish skin color for fair tones and grayish skin color for darker tones, not drinking enough fluids, persistent vomiting, not waking up or not as responsive as usual or not interacting, signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing/not passing urine/in infants lack of tears when crying, being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough, fever with rash, and seizures
- Emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention in adults include: Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, dizziness or confusion, not drinking enough fluids or vomiting and unable to keep liquids down, severe or persistent vomiting, and flu-like symptoms improve but return with fever and worse cough
- To prevent yourself from getting and spreading the flu: Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing and sneezing, flu spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes making it important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and if a tissue is

unavailable use your elbow or shoulder to cover your cough or sneeze **not your hands**, and stay home when you are sick

- Parents should: Plan for childcare if your child gets sick or their school is dismissed, plan to monitor the health of your sick child and any other children by checking for fever or other symptoms of the flu, and update emergency contacts with school secretaries in the event that you need to be contacted if your child becomes ill at school
- The H1N1 vaccination should be available in November/December at the school free of charge to staff and students. Detailed information regarding this vaccine will be sent home with students when it becomes available
- Individuals at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medications is important for people at high risk because it can prevent hospitalizations and deaths. Individuals at high risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.
- To prepare for the 2009-2010 flu season the school will be: Working closely with the local health department as well as following the guidelines of the CDC, monitoring symptoms of sick children and reporting that information to the local health department, routinely cleaning areas that students and staff touch often, and providing updated information regarding student exposure to confirmed H1N1 cases, school dismissal, cancelation of mass gatherings, vaccination availability, and general H1N1 information when appropriate
- School officials will work closely with the local and state public health and government officials to make sound decisions regarding schools dismissal in the event that a child or children are diagnosed with H1N1. This decision will consider: The number and severity of cases in an outbreak, the risks of flu spread and benefits of dismissal, and the problems that school dismissal can cause for families and communities.

All information was obtained from the CDC, the Winnebago County Health Department, and the State of Illinois Department of Public Health

For more information visit:

www.flu.gov or call toll free at 1-800-232-4636

www.wchd.org or call 1-815-720-4000

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