



October 26, 2009

Dear Parent,

The H1N1 influenza virus is circulating throughout the San Diego region and every school site in our district has experienced individuals with influenza-like-illness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that nearly all the circulating influenza viruses right now are H1N1 influenza. Some of the absenteeism we are seeing at our schools is due to suspected H1N1 flu. The County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Services Department continues to issue guidelines that children with influenza-like symptoms should stay home from school and children who are not sick should continue to attend school.

We are working closely with the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency to monitor flu conditions in our schools and implement practices to protect the health of our students and staff.

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Teach your children to wash their hands often** with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Coughs and sneezes may be covered using the elbow, arm or sleeve** instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** This includes children with a **fever of 100 degrees F (37.8 degrees C) or greater and a cough and/or a sore throat.** Children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.
- **Also know all the signs and symptoms of the flu.** These symptoms may include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea. Fevers associated with H1N1 last on average 2-4 days.
- **Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever,** without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected. Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks fluids.
- **Seek emergency care** for your child if he or she has trouble breathing; bluish or gray skin color; is not drinking enough fluids; severe or persistent vomiting; sudden dizziness or confusion; pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen; or if symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.
- **At highest risk of serious complications are pregnant women, children under the age of 5 and children with a pre-existing health condition** and should notify their doctor immediately if they develop flu symptoms. Some doctors may decide to give an anti-viral medicine that works best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- **Check with your doctor about getting yourself and your children vaccinated for seasonal (regular) flu and H1N1 flu. The H1N1 flu vaccine is recommended even for those who have had suspected H1N1 influenza.**

For more information, visit www.flu.gov or call 211. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available. Please be sure to check the District and Schools Websites for the most current information.

Remember, keep kids home when they are sick, get them vaccinated, and send them to school when they're healthy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lou Obermeyer
Superintendent

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