



Hastings Public Schools

Administrative Offices

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Dear Parents,

As we begin a new school year, we have active cases of the H1N1 influenza virus in our community. Our goal is to work with parents to insure that our students remain healthy. As the year begins we will work closely with South Heartland District Health Department in following the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control. Our plans may change as this flu season unfolds.

1. What is the H1N1 influenza virus?
 - H1N1 influenza virus is a variant of the influenza A virus
 - Because it is a variant, most people do not have immunity to it
2. What are the symptoms of H1N1 influenza virus?
 - Fever of 100 degrees or higher accompanied by:
 - Cough
 - Sore Throat
 - Body Aches
 - Fatigue
 - Vomiting and diarrhea may be present along with fever and cough and/or sore throat
3. What should parents do if their child has these symptoms?
 - Keep the child at home and not allow them out in the community except to see the doctor to prevent further spread of the illness
 - Consider keeping them away from other family members as much as possible to prevent further spread of the illness
 - Contact their doctor for assistance
 - Give the child plenty of clear fluids like water, gatoraid, broth, etc.
 - Take medication to reduce fever as the doctor suggests
 - Make sure the child gets plenty of rest
4. What will the school do if a child develops the symptoms of the H1N1 virus at school?
 - Isolate the child from other students
 - Contact parents to come and get the child
 - Instruct the parents to keep the child home until they have been fever free for at least 24 hours without taking any fever reducing medication (Any medication containing acetaminophen or ibuprofen)

5. How do I keep my child healthy all year long?
 - Give your child a well balanced diet including breakfast each morning
 - Make sure your child gets 8-10 hours of sleep each night
 - Teach your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw the tissue away or cough or sneeze into their sleeve instead of into their hands
 - Encourage frequent hand washing or frequent use of hand sanitizer
 - Immunize your child against seasonal flu and H1N1 influenza virus when the vaccine is available
6. What can parents do to prepare for possible flu illness in their families?
 - Get a reliable thermometer so that you can check your child for possible fever
 - Make plans for childcare in the event that your child becomes ill or there is a school closing
 - Be sure that the school has phone numbers that will reach you during the school day in case your child becomes ill
 - Make arrangements for transportation for your child during the school day if they become ill if you do not have a car or if you cannot leave your job

As vaccine becomes available to protect children from seasonal influenza as well as the H1N1 influenza virus, we will be communicating with parents about how to get the vaccine for your children.

If you have further questions about the flu or the H1N1 influenza, you can contact your school nurse, South Heartland District Health Department at (402) 462-6211 or www.flu.gov.

HPS Nursing Staff