



The Flu-And You Information/Guide for Parents

This past spring everyone became aware of and concerned about a new flu virus, H1N1.

Officials were very concerned about this new flu virus at first because they did not know how severe it would be. They were also concerned about the possibility of it spreading very quickly. We now know that the H1N1 flu is no more severe than the seasonal flu. However, since a vaccine against H1N1 was not available, it quickly spread around the world. To date, that is the main concern regarding H1N1.

EEISD does have a plan

EEISD does have a pandemic flu plan in place and we are ready to address issues as they arise. District officials will continue to work closely with local, county, state and national health officials regarding H1N1 or any other health related threats to our students and community. Our nurses will continue to monitor the health of our students and take appropriate steps, including sending sick children home. This includes children identified with a fever while at school. Our custodial staff utilizes disinfecting agents as a

part of their regular routines which include regular cleaning of surfaces most likely to be an issue in the spread of communicable diseases. Campus staff will continue to educate students about proper personal hygiene. The district will also continue to share this type of information with parents with the hope that hygiene at home will help keep our students healthy.

Will you close schools if there is a case of H1N1?

Currently, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advises against the closure of schools due to cases of H1N1 or the seasonal flu. Should there be a serious outbreak of the flu (or any other communicable disease) at a particular school, district officials could decide to close a school in consultation with health officials.

The following information about the flu and H1N1 is courtesy of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. We encourage you to take a moment to read through the information and help us keep our schools a healthy learning environment.

What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by influenza viruses. Flu viruses cause illness, hospital stays and deaths in the United States each year. There are many different flu viruses and sometimes a new flu virus emerges to make people sick.

What is novel H1N1 flu?

Novel H1N1 flu is a new and very different influenza virus that is spreading worldwide among people. It was called "swine flu" at first because it has pieces of flu viruses found in pigs in the past. However, novel H1N1 has not been detected in U.S. pigs. This flu season, the new virus may cause a lot more people to get sick than during a regular flu season.

How serious is the flu?

The flu can be very serious, especially for younger children and children of any age who have one or more chronic medical conditions. These conditions include asthma or other lung problems, diabetes, weakened immune systems, kidney disease, heart problems and neurological and neuromuscular disorders. These conditions can result in more severe illness from influenza, including the H1N1 virus.

How does flu spread?

Both H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with influenza. People also may get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of seasonal flu and H1N1 flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea.

How long can a sick person spread the flu to others?

People infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with H1N1 flu.

How can I protect my child against flu?

Get a seasonal flu vaccine for yourself and your child to protect against seasonal flu viruses. Take everyday steps to prevent the spread of all flu viruses. This includes:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

- Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Teach your child to take these actions too.
- Try to keep your child from having close contact (about 6 feet) with sick people, including anyone in the household who is sick.
- Keep surfaces like beside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by sick persons in your household in the trash.

What should I use for hand cleaning?

Washing hands with soap and running water (for as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice) will help protect against many germs. When soap and running water are not available, wipes or gels with alcohol in them can be used (the gels should be rubbed into your hands until they are dry).

What can I do if my child gets sick?

If your child is 5 years or older and otherwise healthy and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids.

If your child is younger than 5, or of any age and has a medical condition like asthma, diabetes, or a neurologic problem and develops flu-like symptoms including a fever and/or cough, call your doctor or get medical attention. This is because younger children and children who have chronic medical conditions (like asthma or diabetes) may be at higher risk of serious complications from influenza infection, including H1N1. Talk to your doctor if you are worried about your child's illness.

Can my child go to school, day care or camp if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children.

When can my child go back to school after having the flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (Their fever should be gone without them having taken a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F or 37.8°C.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov.