

October 14, 2009

To: District 91 Parents/Guardians

From: Donna Gray, Superintendent, District 91  
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Subject: Flu Information

Late yesterday afternoon, we learned that we have one suspected case of the H1N1 flu virus at Milne Grove School in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We have been in contact with the Will County Health Department. We have and will continue to provide hand sanitizers in the classrooms. We also provide hand sanitizers before lunch and before and after computer lab use. We urge students and staff to wash their hands often. We are disinfecting desks, door knobs, drinking fountains, etc. The precautions we currently have in place at District 91 meet the standards set by the CDC. We will continue to take precautions to stop the spread of the flu in our school. Prevention is the key to stopping the flu.

**How to reduce the risk of getting the flu:** Getting a yearly flu shot (influenza vaccine) is the best way to reduce your chances of getting the flu. There is a specific flu shot for H1N1. Other ways to reduce your risk are:

- Wash your hands often
- Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes, and mouth
- Do not share items that go in your mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your arm when coughing or sneezing
- Stay home when you are sick!

**How the H1N1 influenza virus is spread:** The flu is spread or transmitted by saliva droplets that travel through the air when a person who has the virus coughs or sneezes. The virus enters the nose, throat, or lungs of a person and begins to multiply, causing symptoms of influenza. Influenza may, less often, be spread when a person touches a surface that has flu viruses on it (a door handle, for example) and then touches his or her nose or mouth.

A person can spread the flu starting one day before he or she feels sick. Adults can continue to pass the flu virus to others for another 5 to 7 days after symptoms start. Some people can pass the virus for longer than seven days.

**Signs and Symptoms of Influenza:** The flu is different from a cold. Influenza usually comes on suddenly, and may include these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Sneezing, runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches, headache, chills, and SOMETIMES vomiting and diarrhea
- Some people sick with the flu will not have a fever

If your child complains of body aches, fever or sore throat, it is recommended that he/she stay home until the symptoms are gone. If your child stays home and has a confirmed case of H1N1, **PLEASE** report it to the school. Remember that most people diagnosed with H1N1 only experience mild illness and do not require medical care. The H1N1 flu, however, can be serious if there is a pre-existing condition. If you have any questions or concerns, the Health Department recommends that you contact your doctor.

Influenza is caused by a virus, so antibiotics (like penicillin) don't work to cure it. Do not give aspirin to a child or teenager who has the flu. NEVER give aspirin to children or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms, particularly fever, without first speaking to your doctor. Giving aspirin to children and teenagers who have influenza can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye syndrome. Children or teenagers with the flu should get plenty of rest, drink lots of liquids, and take medicines that contain no aspirin to relieve symptoms.

**Parents – We need your help. If your child is sick, do NOT send him/her to school. Your child should NOT come to school with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher. If your child has had a fever, we request that they be FEVER FREE for 24 hours before they return to school. Remember that the H1N1 virus is to be treated just as the seasonal flu is treated.**

More information can be found by calling your doctor or checking the following websites: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) [www.provena.org/flu](http://www.provena.org/flu)