

Swine Flu: Recommendations for Schools



Facts:

- There are no reported cases of Swine Flu in Tennessee at this time.
- Local Health Department officials are in contact with the CDC and Tennessee Department of Health several times each day to make sure we have current information.
- We will send updates to you IF THE INFORMATION CHANGES.
- The best way to prevent the spread of most communicable diseases is by following the standard recommendations;
 1. WASH HANDS after coughing, sneezing, using a tissue. (Alcohol gel is a good substitute if soap and water are not available.)
 2. COVER YOUR COUGH or SNEEZE.
 3. Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth) as much as possible.
 4. Stay home from school or work when ill so that you do not make others ill.
 5. See the handouts which are attached, including “Preventing the Flu.” (http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_003). This can be shared with teachers, students and parents- if you so choose. Both English and Spanish versions are attached.
 6. Educate children of all ages about good health habits using “Germs are not for Sharing”. Complimentary copies were provided by TDH to all elementary schools. Also, see handouts, posters and classroom activities (“Cover your Cough” <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>, “Germstoppers” <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/>, etc.) that are mentioned on the “Preventing the Flu” handout. They are available at www.cdc.gov. Many of these are also available in Spanish.

What should schools do?

- Exclude students and staff who may be ill- following standard illness guidelines
 1. Fever over 100 degrees, with or without the following symptoms, which are typical of seasonal influenza and swine flu:
 - a. Cough or sore throat
 - b. Stuffy nose
 - c. General aches and pains or excessive tiredness
 - d. Chills
 - e. Headache
 - f. Vomiting and/or diarrhea are seen in some persons
 2. Refer students or staff with these symptoms to their own health care provider.
 3. Students or staff with these symptoms should stay out of school until they are free from the symptoms for 24 hours, and until they are feeling “back to normal.”
- If you become aware that a person with these symptoms has been in close contact with a person who is a confirmed case of swine influenza, or travelled within 7 days to a community either within the United States or internationally where there are one or more confirmed swine influenza A(H1N1) cases, CALL the Health Department at 544-7717.
- DO NOT EXCLUDE students or staff simply because they have been to a community with confirmed swine influenza.
- It is not necessary to “sanitize” your school other than routine housekeeping. Schools can reduce the risk of spreading all types of infections by regularly wiping down toys and hard surfaces that are in contact with children’s hands.
- Advise parents to plan for caring for children at home if they are sick (emphasize strict enforcement of exclusion of sick children with any respiratory illness)
- School officials should begin to prepare for the possibility of school dismissal. This includes asking teachers, parents and officials in charge of critical school-associated programs (such as meal services) to make contingency plans.

Any questions?

1. Call the Health Department at (901) 544-6969
2. Go to www.cdc.gov/swineflu/ for frequent updates and for much more detailed information.

As of April 27, 2009