

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. JOSEPH

925 Felix Street
St. Joseph, Missouri 64501

Eileen Duty
Coordinator of Health Services

Telephone (816) 671-4000
Fax (816) 671-4470

August 27, 2009

Dear Parents,

As you are well aware the H1N1 virus has continued to be a problem for most communities with cases spreading through the summer. We know that the vaccine for H1N1 will not be available until October for those individuals that the Center for Disease Control recommends to be at risk and receive the vaccine first. So we ask that your family assist the school district family with steps to keep from getting sick and spreading the flu.

There are basic ways for you to help. Families, students, and staff can keep from getting sick and spreading the flu by...

- practicing good hand hygiene. Wash your hands often with soap and water especially after coughing or sneezing. Remember alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- practicing respiratory etiquette. The main way that flu spreads is from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, so it is important to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands.
- staying home if you are sick. Keep sick children at home. Keeping sick children at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
- staying home 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- staying home until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever even if you are using antiviral medications.
- cleaning surfaces and items with a cleaning agent that is recommended to be used in areas that are most likely to have frequent hand contact. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.

Please call your school to report when your child is absent. You can expect your child's school secretary or school nurse to ask you if your child has any flu-like symptoms. We have to report our absences weekly to the Health Department.

If your child is medically fragile please contact your primary care physician for more advice about flu precautions and the vaccine. We are working closely with the Buchanan County Health Department and are monitoring the latest information from the Center for Disease Control. Please contact Eileen Duty RN,BSN, (671-4000) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Eileen Duty

Eileen Duty
Coordinator of Health Services