



Instructions for School and District Sites on Managing Students and Staff with Flu-Like Symptoms*

(* These are based on CDC recommendations, as of August 2009, and pertain to times when flu virus symptoms are not severe in low-risk individuals. These instructions may change and will be updated, as necessary.)

Preparing your School for Flu

1. Identify a room where students with flu-like symptoms can be isolated until they are taken home. The room should be separate from, but not distant from, the nurse's office.
2. Develop a plan for how the room will be staffed, if one or more students is awaiting pick-up. To the extent feasible, limit the number of staff assigned to evaluating and observing ill children.
3. Have appropriate masks available for staff assigned to observing students in isolation and to assisting students sent to health office for flu-like symptoms (i.e., taking temperatures).
4. Stock face masks that will fit students using the isolation room.
5. Make sure that bathrooms are equipped with soap and paper towels.
6. If your school is not equipped with enough sinks with soap and water to meet staff and student hand-washing needs, have hand sanitizer (min. of 60% alcohol) available. Hand-washing should be encouraged upon school arrival, and before and after recess and lunch.
7. Identify classrooms on your site that have high numbers of students who are at higher risk for flu complications. These include classrooms where:
 - a. most students are under age 5 years
 - b. most students have a chronic underlying medical condition, such as asthma, G-tube, neuromuscular and metabolic disorders, and diabetes.
 - c. most female students are pregnant.
8. If possible, display educational posters and other outreach efforts that emphasize: covering coughs and sneezes; frequent hand washing; staying home when sick; and the importance of getting flu vaccines, both for seasonal and H1N1, when available. Nursing and Wellness can provide resources.
9. Schools and departments should track unusually high rates of staff and/or student illness and report that information to Nursing and Wellness Office at (858) 627-7580.
10. Clean surfaces and items, which are more likely to have frequent hand contact (e.g., doorknobs, desk tops, keyboards) with cleaning agents that are usually used. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not required or recommended.

Managing Staff and Students on Campus with Flu-Like Symptoms

1. Flu-like symptoms consist of fever (100° and above) with cough. Other symptoms including sore throat, chills, aches, headache, runny or stuffy nose, nausea, and vomiting also often accompany flu.
2. Staff with flu-like symptoms should be relieved from duty and sent home, as soon as possible
3. Students should be isolated from others in the "isolation" room with supervision. Try to limit the number of staff caring for these children. Ill children should be offered clear fluids as tolerated and observed for signs that urgent care is required.
4. Once temperature has been measured and recorded, school nurses may offer acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) if there is signed parental consent on record.
5. Caretakers should wear masks when caring for sick children.
6. Provide a mask to sick persons to wear, if they can tolerate it. Do not force a child or staff member to wear a mask.

PLEASE NOTE: There are no restrictions on healthy siblings of ill children.

Next Steps (consult with school nurse if available)

1. **Most people with flu do not require a physical examination by a doctor** if they are not at high risk for complications. This decision is at the discretion of the ill staff members and parents of ill students.
2. **Persons with the following conditions should be advised to call and notify their physician about flu symptoms**, as they may be candidates for anti-viral medication and/or physical exams:
 - Asthma, diabetes and other metabolic conditions, heart disease
 - Neurologic disorder or neuromuscular disorder
 - Pregnant
 - Younger than age 5 or older than age 65
 - Lives in a household with someone with one of the above conditions or with an infant under age 6 months.
3. **Persons with the following symptoms should be advised to see a doctor that day:**
 - Sudden dizziness
 - Not drinking enough fluids
 - Confusion
 - So irritable that child does not want to be held.
4. **Consider urgent medical referral, including calling 911, for persons with these symptoms:**
 - Breathing quickly or trouble breathing from the chest
 - Bluish or gray skin color
 - Severe or persistent vomiting
 - Not waking up or interacting
 - Severe abdominal pain or chest pain or pressure.

Returning to School after Flu-Like Symptoms

Note: These CDC recommendations are based on minimizing exposure to large numbers of other people who are at high risk for flu complications.

- (A) **Students returning to classrooms consisting mostly of low-risk children age 5-years and older:**
May return when fever-free for 24 hours, if student has not used Tylenol, Motrin or other fever-reducing drugs for those 24 hours.
- (B) **Students returning to classrooms with high numbers of students who are at high-risk for flu complications (i.e, less than age five years, chronic underlying medical conditions, pregnant):**
May return after a full 7 days after the onset of symptoms OR when symptom-free plus 24 hours, whichever period is **longer**. (Examples: a student ill for 7 days stays out of school for 8 days; a student without any symptoms 4 days after onset, must stay home for a full 7 days).

Parent-initiated Measures

- Parents may send hand sanitizer to school for their own child's use or may contribute to the school supply, if appropriate (i.e., 60% minimum alcohol content).
- Some parents send healthy children to school wearing masks. This should be tolerated, but not encouraged.
- Parents should be encouraged to pre-plan child care options if their child(ren) become ill and are excluded from school, or if their classroom or school is closed due to high infection rates.
- Parents can find updated information on the district H1N1 website at www.sandi.net.

Please be advised that these instructions may change as the flu season progresses. For information or with questions, please contact Nursing and Wellness at (858) 627-7580.

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