

OTHER CDC FACTS ON INFLUENZA & YOUR SCHOOL

- *Approximately 1/5 of the U.S. population attends or works in schools. (U.S. Dept of Ed, 1999).*
- *Some viruses and bacteria can live from 20 minutes up to 2 hours or more on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks. (Ansari, 1988; Scott and Bloomfield, 1989)*
- *Nearly 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold alone. (CDC, 1996)*
- *Addressing the spread of germs in schools is essential to the health of our youth, our schools, and our nation.*
- *Students need to get plenty of sleep and physical activity, drink water, and eat good food to help them stay healthy in the winter and all year.*

Always remind children to:

- ***Cover their nose and mouth*** with a tissue when they cough or sneeze—have them throw the tissue away after they use it.
- ***Wash their hands often with soap and water***, especially after they cough or sneeze. If water is not near, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- ***Remind them to not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.*** Germs often spread this way

Remind children and teachers to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand cleaners, and make sure that supplies are available to prevent the spread of germs.

- *Encourage teachers and children to use soap and water to wash hands when hands are visibly soiled, or an alcohol-based hand cleaner when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled.*
- *Encourage teachers to wash their hands to the extent possible between contacts with children, such as before meals or feedings, after wiping the child's nose or mouth, after touching objects such as tissues or surfaces soiled with saliva or nose drainage, and after assisting a child with toileting.*
- *Encourage children to wash hands when their hands have become soiled. Teach children to wash hands for 15-20 seconds (long enough for children to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).*
- *Oversee the use of alcohol-based hand cleaner by children and avoid using these on the sensitive skin of infants and toddlers.*
- *Rub hands thoroughly until the alcohol has dried, when using alcohol-based hand cleaner.*
- *Keep alcohol-based hand cleaner out of the reach of children to prevent unsupervised use.*
- *Ensure that sink locations and restrooms are stocked with soap, paper towels or working hand dryers.*

Keep the school environment clean and make sure that supplies are available.

- *Clean frequently touched surfaces, toys, and commonly shared items at least daily and when visibly soiled.*
- *Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered household disinfectant labeled for activity against bacteria and viruses, an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant, or EPA-registered chlorine bleach/hypochlorite solution. Always follow label instructions when using any EPA-registered disinfectant. If EPA-registered chlorine bleach is not available and a generic (i.e., store brand) chlorine bleach is used, mix ¼ cup chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of cool water.*
- *Keep disinfectants out of the reach of children.*

Remind children and teachers to cover their noses and mouths when sneezing or coughing.

- *Advise children and teachers to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and to put their used tissue in a waste basket.*
- *Make sure that tissues are available in all classrooms, and common areas such as reading rooms and rooms where meals are provided.*
- *Encourage teachers and children to wash their hands or use an alcohol-based hand rub as soon as possible, if they have sneezed or coughed on their hands.*

Observe all children for symptoms of respiratory illness.

Observe closely all children for symptoms of respiratory illness. Notify the parent if a child develops a fever (100°F. or higher under the arm, 101°F. orally, or 102°F. rectally) or chills, cough, sore throat, headache, or muscle aches. Send the child home, if possible, and advise the parent to contact the child's doctor.

- *Young children can become quite ill with influenza very quickly, and might require urgent medical attention and possibly hospitalization. If a child has difficulty breathing, is lethargic, or appears to be worsening rapidly, consider calling a physician or 911 in addition to notifying a parent.*

**Encourage parents of sick children to keep their children home.
Encourage sick teachers to stay home.**

- *Encourage parents of sick children to keep the children home and away from the child care setting until the children have been without fever for 24 hours, to prevent spreading illness to others. Similarly, encourage sick teachers to stay home.*

Consult your local health department when increases in respiratory illness occur in the school setting.

- *Consult with your local or state health department for recommendations to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.*