

ACTION STEPS FOR TEACHERS TO
PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FLU
Teacher Fact Sheet

H1N1= influenza, the flu

Spread from human to human through coughing or sneezing by people with the flu. Many become infected by touching something such as a door handle, keyboard-and then touching their mouth, eyes, or nose.

Signs and symptoms:

Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. May experience diarrhea and vomiting.

High Risk Factors

Pregnancy, asthma, diabetes, compromised immune system, heart disease, kidney disease, neurocognitive and neuromuscular disorders

Prevention

Take these steps to protect yourself from any germs that cause respiratory illness:

- 1) Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- 2) Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If water is unavailable, you may use Alcohol-based hand cleaners.
- 3) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- 4) Try to avoid close contact with sick people
- 5) At this time (9/1/09) the CDC recommends that you stay home at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Keep away from others as much as possible. This means avoiding normal activities including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

Take the following steps ALL the time and not only during a flu pandemic to help keep your students and yourself from getting sick with flu.

- **Educate and encourage students to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue** when they cough or sneeze. Also, provide them with easy access to tissues. Remind them to cover coughs or sneezes using their elbow instead of their hand when a tissue is not available.
- **Remind students to practice good hand hygiene** and provide the time and supplies (easy access to running water and soap or alcohol-based hand cleaners) for them to wash their hands as often as necessary.
- **Be a good role model** by practicing good hand hygiene and covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- **Keep an eye out for sick students and send them to the school health office for further evaluation.** Sick people should stay at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).

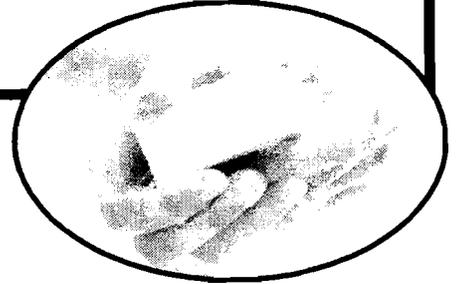
- **Clean surfaces and items** that are more likely to have frequent hand contact such as desks, doorknobs, keyboards, or pens, with cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas.
- **Teachers should also stay home when sick.** Stay home until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).
- **If you are pregnant, have asthma, diabetes, or other conditions that put you at higher risk for complications from the flu, you should speak with your doctor as soon as possible** if you develop symptoms of flu-like illness. People at high risk of flu complications who develop flu can benefit from early treatment with antiviral medicines.
- **If you have children,** plan ahead for childcare if your child gets sick or his or her school is dismissed.
- **Be prepared in case the flu becomes more severe.**
- **Develop options for how schoolwork can be continued at home** (e.g., homework packets, Web-based lessons, phone calls), if school is dismissed or your students are home because someone in their household is sick.
- **Be prepared for sick students or staff to stay home for at least 7 days,** even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.
- **Allow high-risk students to stay home.** These students should make this decision in consultation with their physician or other health professional.
- **Find ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) in your classroom. For example, you might rearrange desks so that there is more space between students, consider canceling classes that bring students together from different rooms, or postpone class trips.

For more information:

- **Visit:** www.flu.gov.
- **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
 - 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
- **TTY:** (888) 232-6348

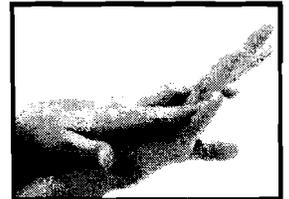
Clean Hands Save Lives!

- ◆ It is best to wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- ◆ When water is not available, use alcohol-based products (sanitizers).
- ◆ Wash hands before preparing or eating food and after going to the bathroom.
- ◆ Keeping your hands clean helps you avoid getting sick.



When should you wash your hands?

- ◆ Before preparing or eating food
- ◆ After going to the bathroom
- ◆ After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- ◆ Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- ◆ After handling uncooked foods, particularly raw meat, poultry, or fish
- ◆ After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- ◆ After handling an animal or animal waste
- ◆ After handling garbage
- ◆ Before and after treating a cut or wound
- ◆ After handling items contaminated by flood water or sewage
- ◆ When your hands are visible dirty



Using alcohol-based sanitizers

- ◆ Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- ◆ Rub hands together.
- ◆ Rub product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

Note: the volume needed to reduce the number of germs varies by product.

Washing with soap and water

- ◆ Place your hands together under water (warm if possible).
- ◆ Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds (with soap if possible).
- ◆ Wash your hands thoroughly, including wrists, palms, back of hands, and under the fingernails.
- ◆ Clean the dirt from under fingernails
- ◆ Rinse the soap from your hands.
- ◆ Dry your hands completely with a clean towel if possible (this helps remove the germs), However, if towels are not available it is okay to air dry your hands.
- ◆ Pat your skin rather than rubbing to avoid chapping and cracking.
- ◆ If you use a disposable towel, throw it in the trash.



Remember: *If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.*