

H1N1 Influenza Information

Center Point Urbana Community Schools is partnering with Linn and Benton County Public Health to monitor and limit the progression of both seasonal influenza and the new H1N1 influenza virus. The Iowa Department of Public Health follows the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and provides recommendations to schools. It is our goal to promote good health for students at CPU and to manage communicable diseases.

It is important to remember how important good handwashing is in reducing the spread of influenza. Washing with soap and water while singing “Happy Birthday to You” twice is ideal. If you don’t have water available, hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol will also work. However, be careful using hand sanitizer that smells good as young children may lick their hands and get sick from the alcohol. Teach your family to cough or sneeze into their elbow or sleeve or a Kleenex instead of their hands and wash your hands afterwards. **And the most important way to decrease the spread of influenza or any illness is to keep your child or yourself home if you are sick.** This means not going to church, the mall, a sporting event or evening activities at school.

So, when is your child too sick to go to school? The following are guidelines recommended by experts at the Mayo Clinic. Your child or you should stay home if you have:

- *Temperature higher than 100 degrees
- *Coughs almost constantly or has trouble breathing
- *Vomits or has diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- *Has a constant runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- *Has sores on mouth or skin that are crusty or yellow or draining
- *Has a red eye with or without crusting/drainage
- *Has an unexplained skin rash

Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in school. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a constructive way. Keeping a sick child home also gives the child an opportunity to rest and recover. When your child has been fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, they can return. This is true for all ages of kids, including High School students.

In order to monitor the incidence of communicable disease in our school, we need your cooperation and support. If your child is absent with an illness, we would like to know the reason. Specifically, we would like to know whether your child has a fever above 100, or if they have a cough or sore throat. The secretaries will be asking these questions as you call your child's absence in to school. Thank you for your help.

If you have questions concerning influenza, CDC has a great website with lots of information. It is www.flu.gov

If you have any questions, please contact Sue Wear, Elementary and High School Nurse at ext. 602 or Karen Lint, Middle School Nurse at ext 201.