

A message from FCPS  
Message sent - 9/11/2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we prepare for the fall flu season, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) wants to continue to provide you with the latest information about the H1N1 virus. Although the situation during the fall and winter is unpredictable, it is anticipated that the impact will be more severe than in spring and summer 2009. While most people who get the H1N1 flu will have only a mild illness similar to seasonal flu, others are considered to be in a high-risk group for complications. At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists school-age individuals with the following conditions to be at higher risk:

- Individuals with chronic pulmonary (including asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), neurologic, neurocognitive, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus).
- Individuals with immunosuppression, including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV.
- Pregnant individuals.
- Persons younger than 18 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy.

If your child falls into one of these high-risk groups, the school system recommends that you contact your physician to discuss the need for flu vaccines as well other strategies related to reducing the risk of exposure. All students, particularly students at high risk for complications, should obtain a seasonal flu vaccine as soon as it is available to them. Students with high-risk conditions are also in the CDC's target group for the H1N1 vaccine when it is available. In the event that your child contracts the flu or has close contact with others who are sick with flu-like illnesses, your physician may want to prescribe antiviral medications.

Families without medical insurance should contact the Access to Care program at Partnership for Healthier Kids at 703-698-2550. This program is designed to identify uninsured children and connect them to an appropriate and affordable source of quality health care services.

FCPS also would like to remind you of the everyday steps that can help prevent the transmission of flu viruses:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If hands are not visibly soiled, hand sanitizers containing at least 60 percent alcohol are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with a flu-like illness, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

FCPS will continue to provide you with timely information and updates as necessary during the school year. Please check the FCPS web site at [www.fcps.edu/news/swineflu.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/news/swineflu.htm) for more details and additional resources.

Sincerely,  
Jack D. Dale  
Superintendent

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