

Frequently Asked School and Flu-related Questions and Answers

- 1) **We know of students from the school who are sick – should the school close?**
Whether a school should be closed because of a flu outbreak is a decision local school and health officials should make based on public concern and how school absenteeism and staffing shortages could effect school operations. School closure is not advised unless a large number of faculty or students are absent and their absence interferes with the school’s ability to function.
- 2) **What about schools that closed under CDC guidance?**
Schools that closed based on previous CDC guidance may reopen.
- 3) **How long should students or staff diagnosed with flu stay out of school?**
Students, faculty or staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home. They should not attend school or go into the community for seven days after onset of symptoms, even if the symptoms resolve sooner, except to seek medical care.
- 4) **If someone is still sick even after the seven-day period has passed, how much longer should he or she stay home from school?**
Students, faculty and staff who are still sick seven days after they become ill, should continue to stay home from school until at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.
- 5) **What if someone comes to school and then begins to show flu-like symptoms?**
Students, faculty and staff who appear to have an influenza-like illness when they come to school—or who become ill during the school day—should be isolated in a room separate from other people and then sent home in accordance with district procedures .
- 6) **What is the best way to be sure individuals who have the flu do not go to school?**
Parents and guardians should monitor their school-aged children and, every morning, faculty and staff should check themselves for flu-like symptoms. Ill persons should stay home.
- 7) **If my child shows flu-like symptoms, should he or she still attend day care or other after-school activities?**
Ill students should stay home. They should not attend alternative childcare, after-school activities, or other group activities.
- 8) **When school administrators learn of students who have been infected with H1N1 (swine flu), whom should those administrators contact?**
School administrators should communicate regularly with local public health officials to obtain up-to-date guidance about reporting of influenza-like illnesses in the school.
- 9) **What can school administrators do to control the spread of any influenza virus in their schools?**
Schools can help reduce the spread of any influenza - whether it is the H1N1 (swine flu) virus or seasonal flu - by promoting good hand washing hygiene and good cough etiquette.
- 10) **What should students and school staff do to follow “good hand washing hygiene” and “good cough etiquette”?**
Students, faculty and staff should carefully cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. (If a tissue is not available, they should cough or sneeze into their sleeves). They should frequently wash their hands with soap and water, or if hand washing with soap and water is not possible, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.