



Influenza

**Defined as a fever (at least 100 F)
And a cough or sore throat.**

- Influenza (flu) is a respiratory disease caused by a virus that attacks the nose, throat, and lungs. It can be mild, but is sometimes severe and at times can lead to death. It is not the same as the “stomach flu.”
- Influenza symptoms: fever, dry cough, sore throat, headache, extreme tiredness, and body aches
- Virus spread directly through coughing, sneezing and contact with nose or throat discharges. May be spread through the air.
- SCHOOL ACTION & COMMENTS ON COMMUNICABILITY FOR INFLUENZA
 1. **Exclude from school until child feels well**, usually, 2 to 7 days.
 2. **Keep child home for at least 24 hours after fever is gone without fever reducing medications (e.g., Tylenol or Advil).**
 3. Take to the emergency room: *Breathes rapidly, *Bluish skin color, *Does not drink enough fluids, *Irritable or concerned that something does not seem right.
 4. Annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and spread it to others. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season

What can I do if my child has influenza?

- Keep your child as comfortable as possible. Offer plenty of fluids and small, nutritious meals.
- If he/she has a fever, dress him/her in lightweight clothing
- To ease pain, aches or a fever with a temperature greater than 101.3 F, use acetaminophen. Ibuprofen may be used for children over 6 months old. Unless your doctor says otherwise, give the dose recommended on the package. Don't give acetylsalicylic acid (ASA [eg, Aspirin])—or any medicine containing it—to children and teenagers with colds because it can lead to brain and liver damage (Reye syndrome).
- Coughing helps clear mucus from the chest.
- Gargling with warm water or eating a tsp. of honey may ease a sore throat. For children 3 years or older who can safely suck on hard candy without choking can use sugarless hard candy or lozenges containing honey, herbs or pectin. Throat lozenges containing medications that numb the throat (dyclonine, benzocaine, hexylresorcinol, menthol and phenol) should not be used by young children because they can make it hard for them to swallow.

IMPORTANT: If your child is absent due to Influenza-like Illness (fever of 100F or greater and sore throat or cough) report this information to your child's school secretary and for High School Students to the school attendance line Ext. 8025.

For more information related to influenza check out: www.cdc.gov/flu/,

Parent Health Notes From the School Nurse