

A Guide to Influenza

for Manchester Parents and Guardians

September 2009

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year!

In an effort to keep your child healthy this year, the following has been prepared to help you with questions you may have regarding influenza. Should you have any questions, please contact your school's health care professional.

Manchester Public Schools

Bowers Elementary School Buckley Elementary

School Highland Park Elementary School Keeney

Elementary School Martine Elementary School Nathan

Hale Elementary School Madison Elementary School

Verplanck Elementary School Wendell Elementary School

Washington Elementary School Elisabeth M. Bennet

Academy Illing Middle School Manchester High School

Bentley Alternative Education Manchester Regional

Academy Manchester Preschool Center



Q. How can I help protect my child from getting ill with flu symptoms?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends four main ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu at school and at home:

- ▶ Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
- ▶ Stay home if you or your child is sick for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
- ▶ Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

Q. What symptoms should I watch for?

Check your child every morning before sending him or her to school:

If your child has:

Fever* (100 degrees or more) AND sore throat Or cough.

If you don't have a thermometer, feel your child's forehead with your hand. If it is much warmer than usual, your child probably has a fever.

Then you must:

Keep you child home from school and child care for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone, without the use of fever reducing medication. If the symptoms seem severe, contact your health care provider.

But if your child only has:

Fever alone, OR Vomiting or diarrhea OR Sore throat or new cough with no fever

Then you must:

Keep your child home from school and child care until the symptoms are gone for 24 hours.

If your child comes to school with the symptoms of the flu, as described above, or if your child develops these symptoms when they get to school, your child will be sent home until the symptoms are gone for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

If flu conditions become MORE severe, parents should consider the following steps:

- ▶ **Extend the time sick children stay home** for at least seven days, even if they feel better sooner. People who are still sick after seven days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have completely gone away.
- ▶ **If a household member is sick, keep any school-aged brothers or sisters home for five days** from the time the household member became sick. Parents should monitor their health and the health of other school-aged children for fever and other symptoms of the flu.

Also, as a reminder, now would be a good time to consider what arrangements you would need to make to assure that your child is safe when they are sick. They should not be sent to another child care setting where they would be interacting with other people who are not sick.

Q. How will the Manchester Schools respond to an outbreak of influenza?

All Manchester schools will be monitoring influenza-like illnesses as your child's health and safety is our main concern. When your child is home ill, please remember to call the absence to the Attendance Line. Please include whether your child has a fever, cough, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea in your message. If your child has been seen by a health care provider and has been diagnosed with the flu, please indicate this information in your phone message as well.

Please contact your child's nurse by calling the main number at the locations to the right.

Q. How will I be notified of the situation at my child's school?

School and Health Department officials will be monitoring staff and student attendance to determine if the dismissal of students at a particular school is necessary for the safety of students. Parents and guardians need to be alert to all letters and notices that may come home with students. Unlike the influenza outbreak in Spring 2009, parents will not be notified of individual cases of influenza in each school building, but other important information may be sent home with students. Parents and guardians should carefully check local radio and television stations for updates on student dismissals during an outbreak of influenza, as this will be an important method of communication in the event of an epidemic.

Contact Manchester Public Schools

Bowers Elementary School

141 Princeton Street, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3313

Buckley Elementary School

250 Vernon Street, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3302

Highland Park Elementary School

397 Porter Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3430

Keeney Elementary School

179 Keeney Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3354

Martin Elementary School

140 Dartmouth Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3367

Nathan Hale Elementary School

160 Spruce Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3346

Robertson Elementary School

65 North School Street, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3372

Verplanck Elementary School

126 Olcott Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3383

Waddell Elementary School

163 Broad Street, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3392

Washington Elementary School

94 Cedar Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3332

Elisabeth M. Bennet Academy

1151 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3571

Illing Middle School

227 East Middle Turnpike, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3400

Manchester High School

134 East Middle Turnpike, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3521

Bentley Alternative Education

134 East Middle Turnpike, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3342

Manchester Regional Academy

665 Wetherell Street, Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 647-3495

Manchester Preschool Center

57 Hollister Street, Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3501



Guidance on how long to keep a child with flu symptoms home is subject to change. For the most updated information, visit the Connecticut Flu Watch website at: <http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch.com> and the district's web site at <http://humanservices.townofmanchester.org/health> and <http://boe.townofmanchester.org>