



Public Health

Delta & Menominee Counties



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August 18, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

There are two types of influenza (flu) to be concerned about this year. The first type is the seasonal flu that happens every fall and winter. The second type is the H1N1 (swine) flu that began causing illness in people last spring and has continued to occur in Michigan and throughout the world this summer. A vaccine to prevent H1N1 flu is under production but **not yet available**. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified priority groups to receive the vaccine when it is ready. These priority groups include school-aged children, along with preschoolers and those in daycare. The Health Department expects to hold vaccination clinics in schools later this fall, as soon as the vaccine arrives. Participation in these clinics will be voluntary. You will receive more information about these clinics as they are scheduled.

In the meantime, you can help prevent the spread of influenza by doing the following:

- If your child is sick with flu-like symptoms, **keep them home**. After they are free of fever or signs of fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications), they may return to school. Flu symptoms include:
 - A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
 - Extreme tiredness or fatigue
 - Diarrhea and vomiting (in some cases)
 - Body aches
 - Sore throat
 - A prominent cough
 - A prominent headache
- Do NOT give any aspirin or aspirin-containing products to children/adolescents at any time. It is important to read the labels on cough and cold remedies as some may contain aspirin.
- Cover noses and mouths with tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash after it has been used.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing and before eating. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid contact with individuals who have flu symptoms

It is also important to protect yourself and your children from regular seasonal influenza. We strongly encourage **everyone** over 6 months of age to be vaccinated against **seasonal influenza**. This vaccine provides protection against the usual flu that circulates in our community each winter but it **does not protect against H1N1**. Vaccine to protect your family from the seasonal influenza will be available from your health care provider or from the Health Department in early fall. H1N1 vaccine will be available a bit later.

We will keep you informed as more information becomes available. Remember, you will play an important role in protecting the health of your family this fall.

Sincerely,

Barbara Cheneier, MPA
Health Officer/Administrator