

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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Claude W. Mitchell, MPH
Health Officer



June 1, 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Warren County Health Department confirmed cases of novel influenza A H1N1 in Warren County on May 28, 2009. Currently there are suspect cases of H1N1 within the county that are under investigation by the Warren County Health Department and New Jersey Department Health and Senior Services.

The Warren County Health Department is following the recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services.

School administration continues to work closely with us to monitor for new cases. Regardless of any suspect or confirmed cases in your school, as a precaution the school will be following interim recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Students and staff with influenza like symptoms (fever with cough and/or sore throat) must stay home and not attend school. Parents/staff should report any of these symptoms when reporting absence. Student/staff with influenza (fever, cough, and/or sore throat) like illness should remain home for at least 7 days after illness onset and 24 hours after all symptoms disappear. Students, faculty and staff who are still sick 7 days after they become ill should continue to stay home from school until at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.

As a precaution, based on recommendations from the CDC, the school's custodial staff will conduct thorough cleaning.

Good hygiene practices both at home and school will help reduce the risk of infection:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; put the used tissue in a wastebasket and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Use soap and water and wash your hands for 20 seconds; or

- Use an alcohol-based gel hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) or alcohol-based hand wipes; rub these on the hands until the liquid or gel dries.

Your cooperation is important to the success of these measures. Please keep your children at home, and avoid social events/activities if they are ill. It is important to report all symptoms of illness when reporting an absence to the school.

New information on disease severity and the extent of community spread led to a revision of the school and child care program closure guidance. The large number of confirmed or probable cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) reported from most states, with numerous disease clusters, indicates spread within communities that makes individual school and child care program closure less effective as a control measure. Most U.S. cases have not been severe and are comparable in severity to seasonal influenza. CDC, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the Warren County Health Department Health officials will continue to closely monitor the severity and spread of this novel H1N1 influenza outbreak.

For the most current information visit the Warren County website at www.co.warren.nj.us, or the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services www.nj.gov/health/er/h1n1/ or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.

Please contact the Warren County Health Department at 908-475-7960 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Claude Mitchell
Warren County Health Officer