

Infection Control in Schools and Workplaces

- In schools and workplaces, infection control for pandemic influenza should focus on:
 - Keeping sick students, faculty, and workers away while they are infectious.
 - Promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and hand hygiene as for any respiratory infection. The benefit of wearing masks in these settings has not been established.
- School administrators and employers should ensure that materials for respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette (i.e., tissues and receptacles for their disposal) and hand hygiene are available. Educational messages and infection control guidance for pandemic influenza are available for distribution. (CDC will develop educational materials appropriate to various audiences.)

Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette

To contain respiratory secretions, all persons with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection, regardless of presumed cause, should be instructed to:

- Cover the nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Use tissues to contain respiratory secretions.
- Dispose of tissues in the nearest waste receptacle after use.
- Perform hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials.

Infection Control in Community Settings

Infection control in the community should focus on “social distancing” and promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and hand hygiene to decrease exposure to others. This could include the use of masks by persons with respiratory symptoms, if feasible. Although the use of masks in community settings has not been demonstrated to be a public health measure to decrease infections during a community outbreak, persons may choose to wear a mask as part of individual protection strategies that include cough etiquette, hand hygiene, and avoiding public gatherings. Mask use may also be important for persons who are at high risk for complications of influenza. Public education should be provided on how to use masks appropriately. Persons at high risk for complications of influenza should try to avoid public gatherings (e.g., movies, religious services, public meetings) when pandemic influenza is in the community. They should also avoid going to other public areas (e.g., food stores, pharmacies); the use of other persons for shopping or home delivery service is encouraged.

Masking and separation of persons with symptoms of respiratory infection

During periods of increased respiratory infection in the community, persons who are coughing should be offered either a procedure mask (i.e., with ear loops) or a surgical mask (i.e., with ties) to contain respiratory secretions. Coughing persons should be encouraged to sit as far away as possible (at least 3 feet) from others in common waiting areas. Some facilities may wish to institute this recommendation year-round.