



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M.
GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

May 1, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Carol Wolenberg, Deputy Superintendent *Carol*

SUBJECT: Michigan Influenza A (H1N1 Virus) Update

This memorandum is to provide school officials with important information and guidance on the Influenza A (H1N1) Virus. As you know, this information is continually changing and we recommend that you regularly check for updates at both the state and national web sites that have been established and are referenced below.

Michigan now has confirmed cases of Influenza A (H1N1 Virus). As a preventative measure, parents of students exhibiting flu-like symptoms should call their health care provider to report the illness before seeking care at a clinic, physician's office or hospital.

Each school district should have a plan dealing with this type of event. One key component of each plan should include developing a strong working relationship with the local county health officer. This relationship will be critical, especially if any students in your district are suspected of having contracted the Influenza A (H1N1) Virus.

If probable or confirmed cases of Influenza A (H1N1) Virus involving Michigan students arise, local school districts and local health officials continue to have the authority to determine the appropriate course of action necessary to protect students, parents, and the community. The public health code gives statutory authority to the local public health officer to close one or more schools or districts in their jurisdiction. Note: This virus is a treatable illness with two specific antiviral prescription medications – oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza).

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

KATHLEEN N. STRAUS – PRESIDENT • JOHN C. AUSTIN – VICE PRESIDENT
CAROLYN L. CURTIN – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
NANCY DANHOF – NASBE DELEGATE • ELIZABETH W. BAUER
REGINALD M. TURNER • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

The State of Michigan has partially activated the State's Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and Joint Information Center (JIC) in Lansing to ensure a collaborative response to any potential Influenza A (H1N1) Virus cases. The SEOC is staffed by several state agencies to monitor the ongoing situation with local, state and federal agencies. The Michigan Department of State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division oversees the SEOC.

The Community Health Emergency Coordination Center (CHECC) has also been fully activated to oversee reporting of potential Influenza A (H1N1) Virus cases in Michigan and provide public health officials with updated information.

The Michigan Departments of Community Health and Education, along with representatives from local health departments and schools, have developed a workbook for school officials to use in planning for an influenza pandemic. The workbook also includes suggested lesson plans and resources for educating the students on disease spread and mitigation. This useful tool is available at: <http://mdch.train.org/panflu/education>.

The CDC is recommending several proactive measures to prevent or reduce the possibility of transmission of the Influenza A (H1N1) Virus. These include encouraging students and staff to:

- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- Wash hands often to help protect the spread of germs.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home from school or work when sick.
- Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean/disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

In an effort to provide Michigan citizens with accurate and timely information on Influenza A (H1N1) Virus, as well as updates on the state's actions to protect residents, a state web site has been established. This web site will house all materials produced and distributed by the State of Michigan regarding Influenza A (H1N1) Virus (formerly known as Swine Flu) and is located at www.michigan.gov/swineflu.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed and is regularly updating their guidance on this issue. Current CDC information including guidance to schools is attached. For a complete national update visit www.cdc.gov/swineflu. Parent information is also available at www.cdc.gov/swineflu/parents.htm.

CDC Recommendations -- When Human Infection with Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus is Confirmed in a Community (4.30.09)
Strongly Recommend Home Isolation of Cases:

- Persons who develop influenza-like-illness (ILI) (fever with either cough or sore throat) should be strongly encouraged to self-isolate in their home for 7 days after the onset of illness or at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer. Persons who experience ILI and wish to seek medical care should contact their health care providers to report illness (by telephone or other remote means) before seeking care at a clinic, physician's office, or hospital. Persons who have difficulty breathing or shortness of breath or are believed to be severely ill should seek immediate medical attention.
- If ill persons **must** go into the community (e.g., to seek medical care) they should wear a face mask to reduce the risk of spreading the virus in the community when they cough, sneeze, talk or breathe. If a face mask is unavailable, ill persons needing to go into the community should use a handkerchief or tissues to cover any coughing.
- Persons in home isolation and their household members should be given infection control instructions: including frequent hand washing with soap and water. Use alcohol-based hand gels (containing at least 60% alcohol) when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty. When the ill person is within 6 feet of others at home, the ill person should wear a face mask if one is available and the ill person is able to tolerate wearing it.

Regarding Household Contacts:

- Household contacts who are well should:
 1. Remain home at the earliest sign of illness;
 2. Minimize contact in the community to the extent possible;
 3. Designate a single household family member as the ill person's caregiver to minimize interactions with asymptomatic persons.

School Dismissal and Childcare Facility*Closure:

- Dismissal of students should be strongly considered in schools with a confirmed or a suspected case epidemiologically linked to a confirmed case.
- Decisions regarding broader school dismissal within these communities should be left to local authorities, taking into account the extent of ILI in the community.
- If the school dismisses students or a childcare facility closes, they should also cancel all school or childcare related gatherings and encourage parents and students to avoid congregating outside of the school.
- Schools and childcare facilities should dismiss students for a time period to be evaluated on an ongoing basis depending upon epidemiological findings.

- Schools and childcare facilities should consult with their local or state health departments for guidance on reopening. If no additional confirmed or suspected cases are identified among students (or school-based personnel) for a period of 7 days, schools may consider reopening.
- Schools and childcare facilities in unaffected areas should begin to prepare for the possibility of school dismissal or childcare facility closure. This includes asking teachers, parents and officials in charge of critical school-associated programs (such as meal services) to make contingency plans.

Other Social Distancing Interventions:

- Large gatherings linked to settings or institutions with laboratory-confirmed cases should be cancelled, for example a school event linked to a school with cases; other large gatherings in the community may not need to be cancelled at this time.
- Additional social distancing measures are currently not recommended.
- Persons with underlying medical conditions who are at high risk for complications of influenza may wish to consider avoiding large gatherings.

These recommendations are subject to change as additional epidemiological and clinical data become available.

*Childcare facility: centers and facilities that provide care to any number of children in a nonresidential setting, large family childcare homes that provide care for seven or more children in the home of the provider and small family childcare homes that provide care to six or fewer children in the home of the provide.

CDC Swine Flu: Information for Concerned Parents and Caregivers

What is H1N1 (swine flu)?

H1N1 (swine flu) is a type of influenza (flu) virus that causes respiratory disease that can spread between people. Most people infected with this virus in the United States have had mild disease, but some have had more severe illness, and there has been at least one death. Young children, pregnant women, and people with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease may be at higher risk for complications from this infection. More information about who may be at higher risk will be available when more is known about the disease. There are steps you can take to protect your family and to know when to seek medical care.

What are the symptoms?

In most children, the symptoms of H1N1 (swine flu) are similar to the symptoms of regular flu. They include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Occasionally, vomiting and diarrhea

Young children may not have typical symptoms, but may have difficulty breathing and low activity. Little is known about how H1N1 (swine flu) may affect children. However, we think the infection may be similar to other flu infections. Typically, flu infections cause mild disease in children, but children under 5 years old are more likely to have serious illness than older children. Although rare, severe respiratory illness (pneumonia) and deaths have been reported with flu infections in children. Flu infections tend to be more severe in children with chronic medical conditions.

How to keep from getting it:

Flu viruses spread from person to person mainly through the coughing or sneezing of a sick person. Flu virus may also be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with the virus and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. We think H1N1 (swine flu) spreads the same way as other flu viruses. Right now, there is no vaccine to protect against H1N1 (swine flu), but there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like H1N1 (swine flu):

- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least six feet away from people who are sick.
- Children who are sick should stay home from school and daycare and stay away from other people until they are better.
- In communities where H1N1 (swine flu) has occurred, stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters, or other places where there are large groups of people.

What to do if your child is sick:

- Unless they need medical attention, keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school or daycare.
- Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water, Pedialyte ®).
- Keep the sick child comfortable. Rest is important.
- For fever, sore throat, and muscle aches, you can use fever-reducing medicines that your doctor recommends based on your child's age. Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- If someone in your home is sick, keep him or her away from those who are not sick.
- Keep tissues close to the sick person and have a trash bag within reach for disposing used tissues.

If your child comes in contact with someone with H1N1 (swine flu), ask your doctor if he or she should receive antiviral medicines to prevent getting sick from H1N1 (swine flu).

If your child experiences any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that he or she does not want to be held
- Not urinating or no tears when crying
- Their symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

For more information call 1-800-CDC INFO, or go to <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>