

Important Health Information Concerning “School, Flu & You”

From Canton Public Schools and the Canton Board of Health



Fall, 2009

Dear Families,

A new strain of influenza (flu) virus called H1N1 (also called Swine Flu) has made many people sick around the world. As we begin a new school year, ***we need your help*** to keep our students and staff healthy.

The best way to protect people from the flu and other illnesses is to keep sick people away from healthy people.

If your child or children are sick, they should be kept home from school. Staying home when sick stops the spread of flu and other illnesses and helps the sick person get well.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD EVERY MORNING BEFORE SENDING HIM OR HER TO SCHOOL.

If your child has:	Then:
Fever (100 F or 37.8 C) <u>AND</u> either sore throat or cough <i>Your child may have the flu.</i>	Keep your child home from school and child care until at least 24 hours after their fever is gone (once they have stopped taking fever-reducing medicine.) Medicines that contain acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin) can reduce fever and relieve pain. As the sick person begins to feel better you may decide to stop giving them fever-reducing medicines. Continue to monitor their temperature until it has been normal (98.7 F or 37 C) for 24 hours. Aspirin should NOT be given to children or teenagers with the flu as this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye’s syndrome.
If your child has other symptoms:	Then:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever alone, OR • Vomiting or diarrhea, OR • Sore throat or new cough with no fever 	Keep your child home from school and child care until fever and non-fever symptoms are gone for 24 hours. If fever is present, follow guidance in box above.

If symptoms worsen or persist, call your medical care provider!

The health and safety of your child is our number one priority, so we will be monitoring for influenza-like illness in our schools. If your child comes to school with the symptoms of flu as described above, or if your child develops these symptoms once in school, your child will be sent home and needs to remain at home until their symptoms are gone for 24 hours.

We know that keeping a child home can be disruptive to work and activity schedules,

- **Plan now to assure that your child is safe at home and has care when they are sick**
- **Do not send them to another child care setting where they could get others sick**
- **They should not go to a community setting (shopping centers, malls, restaurants, movies, etc.)**
- **They should not visit with friends or attend sporting events or other extra-curricular activities**

H1N1 flu is a serious illness. Guidance may change depending on the severity and amount of flu cases that develop. We will keep you informed as new information becomes available. Frequent updates are available online:

- Massachusetts Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) web site: <http://www.mass.gov/dph/swineflu>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>
- United States Health and Human Services website: www.flu.gov
- Canton Public School Health website: <http://www.cantonma.org> or call the Canton Board of Health at (781) 821-5021.

Thank you for your attention to this serious matter and for helping us to keep our schools as healthy as possible for all students and staff.

Board of Health Nurse
Terry Khoury, RN

Superintendent of Schools
John D’Auria