

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

Celeste Philip, MD, MPH
Interim State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

January 18, 2018

Dear Parent,

As you may know, flu is spreading easily from person to person and school-age children are among the groups most affected. Seasonal flu activity is on the rise, both in Florida and throughout the U.S. It is important to help protect yourself and your children from getting the flu. If your child contracts the flu virus, your child should stay home until well. Staying home helps prevent the spread of flu to classmates.

Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, or tiredness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people who are very sick or who are at very high risk of serious flu complications and get flu symptoms should be treated with antiviral drugs as soon as possible. **Contact your health care provider when you become ill with flu-like symptoms to determine if antiviral treatment is right for you. Treatment is most effective when started within 48 hours so calling as soon as you become ill is important.**

Please keep your child home if he/she has the flu until at least 24 hours after your child no longer has a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Any children who are sick at school will be sent home.

Remember that not only can healthy behaviors help prevent your chances of getting the flu, they can also help you fight the cold and flu infection. These include:

- **Get your flu vaccine. Although flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, they continue to be the best way to prevent influenza infection and serious influenza complications. It is not too late to get vaccinated this season. The flu vaccine is FREE for children 18 and under at the local Health Department.**
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Avoid unnecessary touching of your eyes, mouth, and nose as you can easily contract the flu just by touching a surface an infected person has touched.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough using a tissue or your upper sleeve, but not your hands. Wash your hands immediately afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat nutritious foods.

Sincerely,
The School Health Team
Florida Department of Health - Madison

**Florida Department of Health
in Madison County**

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