



Office of the Health Officer

June 10, 2009

Dear Parents:

As of June 8, 2009, Prince George's County currently has 33 confirmed cases of novel influenza A (H1N1). Of these 33 cases, 26 are in some manner associated with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). The majority of the cases are in school children between the ages of 5 and 17 years old. The Prince George's County Health Department and the Prince George's County Public School System have been working together to monitor the situation and take preventive measures to keep your children and family safe.

The Prince George's County Health Department is concerned about the number of students continuing to come to school with Influenza-Like Illness (ILI). The ILI is defined as an illness with a fever ≥ 37.8 C (100° F) and who has upper respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, sore throat, runny nose), respiratory distress syndrome, or a sepsis-like syndrome.

Also of concern, is the number of students returning to school earlier than seven (7) days from the beginning of their illness. Students must remain home for at least seven (7) days even if their symptoms resolve sooner.

Please remember to do the following to stop the spread of H1N1:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your children become sick with Influenza-Like Illness, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them for at least 7 days.

Parents, it is necessary for anyone with symptoms of ILI to be excluded from school or work for at least 7 days. Keeping sick students and staff at home will tremendously help to slow and potentially reduce the spread of the virus. We are reminded of the importance of the potential of this virus to cause sickness and even death.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation in stopping the spread of H1N1 in our schools.

Sincerely,

Donald Shell, M.D., M.A.
Health Officer



Jack B. Johnson
County Executive

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