

H1N1 update for Denton ISD parents
From: DISD Health Services Department
Sept. 21, 2009

Dear Parents,

Keeping you up to date regarding health information is a responsibility we take very seriously. We know there are many questions and some anxiety among all regarding what is commonly called "swine flu." We will use the more appropriate term H1N1 flu in all our communications.

We are most definitely in "flu season" here in Denton - some people have seasonal flu, a number most likely have H1N1, and, as school gets back into session, we always see many other conditions that also have some "flu-like symptoms" such as strep throat - it is a time for a variety of viruses and other illnesses to be circulated!

We do continue to see in our district increased numbers of students (and a few employees) who most likely have H1N1 flu. We use the term "most likely" because, even though many health care professionals are using the term "confirmed for H1N1," in reality, the confirmation lab test for that particular strain of flu is only being done on a very small number of people (mostly those who have been hospitalized) who have the signs and symptoms of flu. Because the strains circulating at this point continue to be mild to moderate in their intensity, it is wise to realize that "flu is flu" and the type is not so significant. The treatments are the same - isolation from others, bedrest, medication for comfort that is recommended or prescribed by your health care professional, lots of fluids and healthy nutrition.

The numbers of students and adults that have flu-like symptoms is not an alarming number, in spite of higher numbers - we are doing daily surveillance and monitoring at each of our schools. The principals, school nurses, and attendance staff are working in conjunction to provide the Denton County Health Department with that very important information regarding absences, and we appreciate very much those of you who are communicating with the schools when your children are absent and the reasons for their absence. That is a tremendous help as we go through this season.

We also want to say "thank you" to you for doing those things that help keep our school environment healthy and safe - keeping your children home when they are ill, role-modeling good health habits such as plenty of sleep, good handwashing, healthy nutrition and hydration, and coughing or sneezing into the sleeve or into a tissue. Be sure and talk to your health care provider about vaccine for both seasonal flu and H1N1 flu. It takes all of us working as "health partners" to keep the schools and our community as healthy as possible.

Hopefully, we will soon be able to provide you with information regarding county-wide flu-vaccination clinics; we are working on getting those set up with our county health department. As new information comes to us, we will continue to pass it on. Be assured that you can count on the accuracy, reliability, and care that goes into each update - and feel free to contact any school nurse or the directors of health services if you have further questions.