

# THE FLU AND WHAT TO DO

## TUSSEY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT – NURSING DEPARTMENT

The information below was reprinted from the following website:  
[www.flu.gov/](http://www.flu.gov/) . Please visit this website for further information.

### Action Steps for Parents to Protect Your Child and Family from the Flu this School Year

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 4 main ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu at school and at home:**

1. **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
2. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
3. **Stay home if you or your child is sick** for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
4. **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

### Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 school year:

- Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick or their school is dismissed.
- Plan to monitor the health of the sick child and any other children in the household by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu.
- Identify if you have children who are at higher risk of serious disease from the flu and talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. Children at high risk of serious disease from the flu include: children under 5 years of age and those children with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma and diabetes.
- Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Collect games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained if schools are dismissed or your child is sick and must stay home.

## **Tips for taking care of children (and other household members) with the flu**

- **Stay home if you or your child is sick** until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others. Stay home even if taking antiviral medicines.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes. Clean hands** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after coughing or sneezing.
- **Keep sick household members in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for the sick person.
- **Monitor the health of the sick child and any other household members** by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu. A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius). If you are not able to measure a temperature, the sick person might have a fever if he or she feels warm, has a flushed appearance, or is sweating or shivering.
- **Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention.** These warning signs include:
  - Fast breathing or trouble breathing
  - Bluish or gray skin color
  - Not drinking enough fluids
  - Not urinating or no tears when crying
  - Severe or persistent vomiting
  - Not waking up or not interacting
  - Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
  - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
  - Sudden dizziness
  - Confusion
  - Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- **Check with your doctor about any special care** needed for household members who may be at higher risk for complications from flu. This includes children under the age of 5 years, pregnant women, people of any age who have chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), and people age 65 years and older.
- **Have the sick household member wear a facemask** – if available and tolerable – when sharing common spaces with other household members to help prevent spreading the virus to others. This is especially important if other household members are at high risk for complications from flu.
- **Ask your doctor about antiviral medicines or fever-reducing medicines** for sick household members. Do not give aspirin to children or teenagers; it can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome
- **Make sure sick household members get plenty of rest and drink clear fluids** (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.

