



WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

From: Epidemiology & Communicable Disease Program

To: School Administrators, School Nurses, and concerned Parents

April 28, 2009

Re: Swine Flu: Interim Recommendations to Will County Schools

Dear Administrators, School Nurses and Concern Parents,

So far, no swine flu cases have turned up in Illinois, but schools are getting prepared. Several schools across the country have closed after students were diagnosed with swine flu symptoms, most of whom had just returned from Mexico. We have issued some guidance to health care providers, general public and area hospitals to help them think about when they should be concerned and how to answer the questions that may come up, and we will continue to do that as necessary.

CDC has determined that this swine flu virus is spreading from person to person. Spread from person to person is thought to occur in the same way as seasonal flu, mainly through coughing or sneezing of infected people. However, at this time, it is not known how easily the swine flu virus spreads between people. People with swine flu infection should be considered potentially contagious as long as they are symptomatic or possibly for up to 7 days following illness onset. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- 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.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Page-1

Main Office
501 Ella Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Ph 815.727.8480
Fx 815.727.8484

Community Health Center
1106 Neal Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Ph 815.727.8670
Fx 815.727.8852

Eastern Branch Office
44 Towncenter
University Park, IL 60466
Ph 815.727.8803
Ph 708.534.0800
Fx 708.534.3455

Northern Branch Office
323 Quadrangle Dr.
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
Ph 630.679.7000
Fx 630.679.7015



WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Healthy children need not be kept home. Children who have visited the areas affected by swine flu, but are asymptomatic, should be allowed to attend school unless directed otherwise by local public health authorities, or health care providers. Asymptomatic children should be monitored for at least seven-to-10 days.

Children who are ill should not attend school. In this case, monitor the child for influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, and keep your child home if they are sick. You may want to contact their health care provider, particularly if symptoms are severe. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have recently traveled to or had visitors from areas where swine flu has already been found, including San Diego County and Imperial County, California; San Antonio, Texas; Dickinson County, Kansas; Lorain County, Ohio; and New York City. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

School Dismissal and Childcare Facility Closure:

- Dismissal of students should be strongly considered in schools with a confirmed or a suspected case epidemiologically linked to a confirmed case.
- Decisions regarding broader school dismissal within these communities should be left to local authorities, taking into account the extent of Influenza like Illness (ILI) in the community.
- If the school dismisses students or a childcare facility closes, they should also cancel all school or childcare related gatherings and encourage parents and students to avoid congregating outside of the school.
- Schools and childcare facilities should dismiss students for a time period to be evaluated on an ongoing basis depending upon epidemiological findings.
- Schools and childcare facilities should consult with their local or state health departments for guidance on reopening. If no additional confirmed or suspected cases are identified among students (or school-based personnel) for a period of 7 days, schools may consider reopening.
- Schools and childcare facilities in unaffected areas should begin to prepare for the possibility of school dismissal or childcare facility closure. This includes asking teachers, parents and officials in charge of critical school-associated programs (such as meal services) to make contingency plans.

For frequently asked questions, recommendations and updates on swine flu outbreak, please visit Please visit Will County Health Department website www.willcountyhealth.org or CDC website www.cdc.gov/swineflu .

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Epidemiology & Communicable Disease Staff at (815) 727-8481. Page-2

Main Office
501 Ella Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Ph 815.727.8480
Fx 815.727.8484

Community Health Center
1106 Neal Avenue
Joliet, IL 60433
Ph 815.727.8670
Fx 815.727.8852

Eastern Branch Office
44 Towncenter
University Park, IL 60466
Ph 815.727.8803
Ph 708.534.0800
Fx 708.534.3455

Northern Branch Office
323 Quadrangle Dr.
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
Ph 630.679.7000
Fx 630.679.7015