



Community Unit School District 95
School Health Services



November 2, 2009

This past week, we have seen an increase in students and staff with flu-like symptoms or confirmed cases of Type A influenza. Flu-like symptoms and symptoms of Type A influenza include sudden onset of fever over 100 degrees, chills, cough, runny nose, shortness of breath, sore throat, body aches, general feeling of malaise, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

There are 2 general types of influenza, Type A and Type B. Type B is the seasonal flu for which the flu vaccine is given annually. The H1N1 flu strain is a sub-type of Type A. When you see your doctor, they will perform a flu test that will show positive for either Type A or Type B. **The specific H1N1 test is usually not tested unless the person is hospitalized with severe symptoms.** However if the flu test is positive for Type A, it is probably the H1N1 virus, and doctors will treat accordingly.

Type A or H1N1 differs from the seasonal flu. H1N1 symptoms may be more severe, with a more serious respiratory component than seasonal flu. H1N1 virus is affecting a younger population than the seasonal flu. Type A flu is spread mainly by air droplets through coughing, sneezing, and very close, extended contact with an infected individual. **It is believed that the H1N1 has a very short incubation period, typically 24-48 hours with a range of 1-4 days in most documented cases.** An individual is most contagious just before and during the fever. According to the CDC, the majority of flu cases being reported currently are Type A influenza.

Treatment for the flu is mainly treatment of the symptoms. There is no cure, but antiviral drugs' such as Tamiflu and others, are available for some individuals, especially those at more risk of developing severe symptoms. **It is important to seek early treatment if the individual is in the higher risk category (asthma, diabetes, pregnancy).**

Vaccine clinics with dates and times are posted on the District web-page. Our District **was not** chosen as a vaccine clinic site.

In the District the nurses are surveying sick calls daily, monitoring the number of flu-like illnesses in both the student and staff populations. We are sending students and staff home who present with flu-like symptoms, especially those with fevers over 100 degrees. We are in close contact with the Lake County Health Dept. and following their recommendations.

Each school will notify parents of elementary-age students when five or more students in a child's classroom are absent due to influenza-like- illness on a given day. This classroom update will be provided every two weeks if five or more additional students continue to be absent each day in the particular elementary classroom.

Middle and High School students have a greater number of classmates and classes. There is a challenge of communicating absence information by grade or class to middle and high school parents. For this reason CUSD95 will notify families if their school building has an illness absence rate of 10% or greater. This notification will be posted on the buildings' web-page.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL IF HE/SHE EXHIBITS ANY OF THE INFLUENZA-LIKE-ILLNESS SYMPTOMS!!!

It has been brought to our attention that many parents are misinterpreting the Lake County Health Department guidelines and believe that students will only miss one or two days of school.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME WHILE CONTAGIOUS, EVEN IF THEY DO NOT FEEL THAT ILL!!

Two to three day recovery period **is not the usual course for this illness** it is longer!!!!

Thank you for all your help and consideration concerning the current H1N1 epidemic. Any questions please feel free to contact your building nurse.

Stay well,
Andrea Bonkowski RN, ILCSN
District Nurse