

**Orange County Health Department**  
**Influenza (Flu) Guidance for Schools and Childcare Agencies**  
**July 30, 2009**

According to the current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, the best way to reduce spread of influenza in schools and child care programs is to **focus on**:

- 1) Early identification of ill students and staff**
- 2) Staying home when ill**
- 3) Good cough and hand hygiene etiquette**

School and child care center closings are not routinely recommended. The influenza virus is widespread in our community, as it is around the world. Closure of schools and child care centers is no longer considered an effective means to stop the spread of the virus. School or child care agency administrators will consult with the local Health Director when considering closure of a school or child care agency. The decision to close a school or child care agency is made by the administrators of the school or child care agency and is based on the impact of absenteeism and staffing shortages on the school's or child care agency's ability to operate.

- Parents and guardians should monitor their children, and teachers and staff should **self-monitor every morning for symptoms of influenza-like illness.**
- Students, teachers or staff with fever and a cough or sore throat (flu symptoms) should **stay home.** Do NOT attend school or child care or go into the community (unless it is to seek medical care) **for at least 7 days even if symptoms resolve sooner.**
- Students, teachers and staff who are **still sick 7 days after they become ill** should **continue to stay home from school or child care until at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.**
- Students, teachers and staff who appear to have a fever and a cough or sore throat (flu symptoms) **at arrival or become ill during the day** should be **isolated promptly** in a room separate from other children and **sent home.**
- School and child care closure is not advised for a suspected or confirmed case of novel influenza A (H1N1) and, in general, is not advised unless there is a magnitude of teacher or student absenteeism that **interferes with the school's or child care center's ability to function.**
- Parents of children <5 who are exposed to flu may want to consult their medical provider about anti-viral medication.

Please go to the [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and the Orange County Health Department website at [www.co.orange.nc.us](http://www.co.orange.nc.us) regularly to remain up to date on H1N1 flu.