

As predicted by state health officials the H1N1 flu has started to hit schools. I met with the Mid-Cumberland Region Health Director, a nurse from the local health department, and our school nurse supervisor last week to go over what we need to know and do to handle this problem. We have also received many emails from the State Health Department and CDC on the correct protocol and your principal has received a copy of these.

Here is what we have been told:

Unlike last school year, schools will not close if a case of H1N1 is diagnosed. The number of staff or students sick will determine that.

Dr's are treating this flu just like they are treating the regular seasonal flu.

The people who have complications from this flu have other health issues.

The reason it is affecting younger people is that during the late 70's and early 80's a strain of this flu came through and many of us older people have some immunity.

Prevention of the spreading of the disease is the best thing for us to do.

Don't come to school if you are sick (staff or student).

Don't return to school until you are "Fever Free" for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine.

Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer.

Cough and sneeze in sleeve.

Don't eat or drink after others.

Students or staff experiencing flu symptoms (fever, chills, headache, etc.) should be isolated from others until they can go home.

Your school nurse has been updated on how to handle this situation. Refer sick kids to her.

A vaccine will be out in October consisting of two doses to be taken 21 days apart. School personnel will be on the priority list to get vaccinated first.

We will put all H1N1 information on our Web Site. As mentioned by the health officials last week, many clinics are no longer testing for the H1N1 strain since they are treating it just like the regular "Seasonal Flu".

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