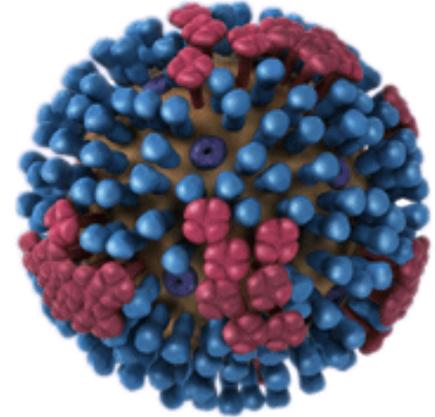




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Influenza virus - Courtesy of CDC

2018 Seasonal Influenza Guidance for Schools

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Overview

- Guidance for Schools to Help Reduce the Spread of Seasonal Influenza in Schools
 - Background, High Risk Groups, Symptoms and Emergency Warning Signs
- Update On Current Influenza Surveillance Data in New York State & Vaccine Recommendations
- Ways Schools Can Help Prevent Influenza
 - Encourage students, parents, and staff to get a yearly flu vaccine.
 - Encourage students, parents, and staff to take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.
 - Educate students, parents, and staff on what to do if someone gets sick.
 - Establish relationships with state and local public health officials for ongoing communication.



Guidance for Schools to Help Reduce the Spread of Seasonal Influenza in Schools



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Background

- Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways.
- Although widespread flu activity occurs every year, the timing, severity, and duration of it depend on many factors, including which flu viruses are spreading, the number of people who are susceptible to the circulating flu viruses, and how similar vaccine viruses are to the flu viruses that are causing illness.
- The timing of flu can vary from season to season. In the United States, seasonal flu activity most commonly peaks between December and March, but flu viruses can cause illness from early October to late May.
- Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughs and sneezes of infected people. Less often, a person also might get the flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes, or nose.



Background

- Many respiratory infections spread from person to person and cause symptoms similar to those of flu.
- Therefore, the strategies in this presentation might help reduce the spread of not only flu, but also respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), rhinovirus, and other viruses and bacteria that can cause illness.
- Each day, about 55 million students and 7 million staff attend the more than 130,000 public and private schools in the U.S.
- Schools can help protect one-fifth of the country's population from flu.



Groups at High Risk for Complications

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant women (and women up to two weeks postpartum)
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- American Indians and Alaska Natives also seem to be at higher risk of flu complications



Groups at High Risk for Complications

People who have medical conditions including:

- Asthma
- Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions
 - Disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve, and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy (seizure disorders), stroke, intellectual disability, moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury
- Chronic lung disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cystic fibrosis
- Heart disease
 - Congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease
- Blood disorders
- Endocrine disorders (including diabetes mellitus)



Groups at High Risk for Complications

- Kidney disorders
- Liver disorders
- Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
- Weakened immune system due to disease or medication (such as people with HIV or AIDS, or cancer, or those on chronic steroids)
- People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- People with extreme obesity (body mass index of 40 or more)



Signs and Symptoms of Flu

- Fever (although not everyone with flu has a fever)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Sometimes diarrhea and vomiting



Emergency warning signs that indicate a person should get medical care right away

In Children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with rash

In Adults

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough



Update On Current Influenza Surveillance Data in New York State



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Influenza Surveillance in New York State

- Influenza activity has been geographically widespread in the State for ten consecutive weeks.
- As of February 10, 2018, approximately 70,000 cases of laboratory confirmed influenza have been reported this influenza season in the State.
- Approximately 14,000 of these individuals have been hospitalized.
- The number of confirmed cases and hospitalized individuals are the highest records in the State since reporting became mandatory in 2004.
- Five influenza associated pediatric deaths have also been reported.



Influenza Vaccine Recommendations



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Influenza Vaccine Recommendations

- Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months and older who do not have contraindications
 - Children aged 6 months through 8 years who have not had 2 or more doses of influenza vaccine before July 1, 2017 will need 2 doses of influenza vaccine administered 4 or more weeks apart
 - 1 dose for everyone else
 - Pregnant women may receive any licensed, recommended and age-appropriate influenza vaccine at any time during pregnancy
 - LAIV (nasal spray) not recommended due to poor effectiveness in recent seasons



Contraindications to Influenza Vaccine

- Previous severe (life threatening) allergy to a prior dose of a seasonal influenza vaccine
- Severe allergy to a component of the vaccine
- Persons with mild egg allergy may safely receive influenza vaccine
- Persons with severe (more than hives) allergic reaction to egg may receive influenza vaccine but should be monitored in a medical setting by a healthcare provider able to recognize and manage severe allergic reactions
- Precautions:
 - History of Guillain-Barré syndrome within 6 weeks of a previous dose of influenza vaccine
 - Moderate or severe acute illness with or without fever



Executive Order No. 176

- On January 25, 2018, NYS Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued Executive Order (EO) No. 176 declaring a Disaster Emergency in NYS in response to this year's severe influenza season
- EO No. 176 temporarily permits pharmacists who are already authorized to administer influenza vaccine to adults 18 years and older also to administer influenza vaccine to children between 2 years and 18 years of age through February 23, 2018
- May be extended for additional 30-day periods if the emergency conditions continue



Ways Schools Can Help Prevent Influenza



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Ways Schools Can Help Prevent Influenza

- Encourage students, parents, and staff to get a yearly flu vaccine.
- Encourage students, parents, and staff to take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.
- Educate students, parents, and staff on what to do if someone gets sick.
- Establish relationships with state and local public health officials for ongoing communication.



Encourage yearly flu vaccine

(students, parents, and staff)

- Teach students, parents, and staff that the single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each flu season.
- Seasonal flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older unless they have a specific contraindication to flu vaccine.
- The seasonal flu vaccine protects against three or four influenza viruses that research indicates is most common during the upcoming season.
- The vaccine viruses are reviewed each year and changed as needed based on international surveillance and scientists' estimations about which viruses will predominate during the upcoming season.



Encourage yearly flu vaccine

(students, parents, and staff)

- Flu vaccines have a very good safety record. Over the years, hundreds of millions of Americans have received seasonal flu vaccines.
 - The most common side effects following flu vaccinations are mild, such as soreness, redness, tenderness, or swelling where the shot was given.
- Flu vaccination efforts should begin by the end of October, if possible.
 - However, as long as flu viruses are circulating, vaccination should continue to be offered throughout the flu season.
- Consider offering seasonal flu vaccination to students at school.
 - School vaccination clinics, which can be lead by local health department staff in partnership with schools, are an option for vaccinating school-aged children against flu.



School Infection Control Practices & Policies

- In consultation with the district medical director and school nurses(RNs), schools should develop and update;
- Building level infection control practices;
- Protocols and plans for monitoring illness in students and staff;
- Plans for dismissing ill students, and how to keep ill persons who are unable to leave separate from others;
- Plans for cleaning the building when high rates of illness occur.

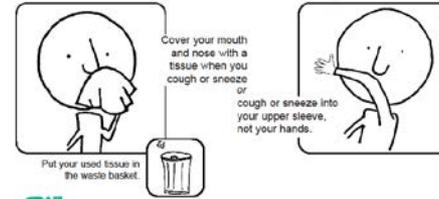


Prevention Actions

- Encourage respiratory etiquette among students and staff through education and the provision of supplies.
 - Teach students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their bent arm. If they use a tissue, they should put the used tissue in a trash can and wash their hands.
 - Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans.

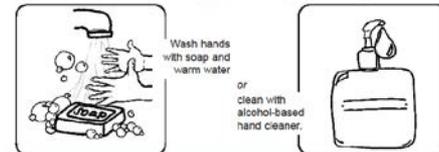
Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

Cover your Cough



Clean your Hands

after coughing or sneezing.



MDH
New York State Department of Health

NEW YORK STATE
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APIC
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology



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Prevention Actions

- Encourage hand hygiene among students and staff through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and the provision of supplies.
- Review with students good hand washing technique. Remind students and staff to wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be used.
- Include handwashing time in student schedules.
- Provide adequate supplies, including clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Encourage students and staff to keep their hands away from their nose, mouth, and eyes.



When to Wash Your Hands

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



How to Wash Your Hands

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds.
 - Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



How to Wash Your Hands

- Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs on them in most situations.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.



When & How to Wash Your Hands

- How do you use hand sanitizers?
 - Apply the product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
 - Rub your hands together.
 - Rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.
- Caution! Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning. Students should be supervised when using hand sanitizers.



Managing Illness in School

Students and staff members with symptoms of influenza like illness (ILI) should be sent home as soon as possible. Students, parents/guardians, and staff should be encouraged to consult with a healthcare provider as necessary or if in a high risk group.

- If ill persons are unable to leave school immediately, then they will need to be separated from others. This is accomplished by placing the ill person in a room separate from others, including not having others pass through the room to prevent transmission. Students will require supervision while in a separate location. Persons supervising students with ILI should not be those at high risk for severe illness as described earlier.



Managing Illness in School

- Ill students and staff should stay home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- Students and staff should be encouraged to follow healthcare providers directives, including taking prescribed medications such as antiviral medications as ordered.

School Cleaning Recommendations

When there are increased rates of illness in students and staff, schools should review cleaning procedures to reduce spread of the illness.

- Provide adequate supplies, such as general EPA-registered cleaning products, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and no-touch trash cans.
- Use general cleaning products normally used. Always follow product label directions. Additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
- Routinely clean surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, and phones



School Cleaning Recommendations

- Flu viruses are relatively fragile, so standard practices, such as cleaning with soap and water, can help remove and kill them.
- Studies have shown that the flu virus can live and potentially infect a person for only 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on a surface. Therefore, special sanitizing processes beyond routine cleaning, including closing schools to clean every surface in the building, are not necessary or recommended to slow the spread of flu, even during a flu outbreak.
- If choosing to use disinfectants, be certain they are EPA registered and use them according to the manufacturer's instructions.



School Cleaning Recommendations

- Immediately clean surfaces and objects that are visibly soiled. If surfaces or objects are soiled with body fluids or blood, use gloves and other standard precautions to avoid coming into contact with the fluid. Remove the spill, and then clean and disinfect the surface.
- Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants. Wash surfaces with a general household cleaner to remove germs. Rinse with water, and follow with an EPA-registered disinfectant to kill germs. Read the label to make sure it states that EPA has approved the product for effectiveness against influenza A virus.



School Cleaning Recommendations

- If a surface is not visibly dirty, you can clean it with an EPA-registered product that both cleans (removes germs) and disinfects (kills germs) instead. Be sure to read the label directions carefully, as there may be a separate procedure for using the product as a cleaner or as a disinfectant. Disinfection usually requires the product to remain on the surface for a certain period of time (e.g., letting it stand for 3 to 5 minutes).
- Use disinfecting wipes on electronic items that are touched often, such as phones and computers. Pay close attention to the directions for using disinfecting wipes. It may be necessary to use more than one wipe to keep the surface wet for the stated length of contact time. Make sure that the electronics can withstand the use of liquids for cleaning and disinfecting.



Student and Staff Absenteeism

Schools should monitor student and staff absence rates.

- When school health professionals and administrators are concerned about increased absentee rates due to illness, they should consult with their medical director who may advise contacting the local department of health for guidance.
- Schools may consult with their local department of health when deciding whether to close a school. Selective school closures are not likely to have a significant effect on transmission rates.
- School closure is not advised unless high absentee rates of staff and students interferes with the school's ability to safely function.



Communication

Schools are encouraged to communicate with staff, families, and the community regarding influenza mitigation strategies taken by the school and prevention strategies that the school and community can undertake such as:

- flu vaccines;
- hygiene measures; and
- staying home when ill.

Schools should partner with their local department of health on developing communication messages containing accurate information

Communication

Establish relationships with state and local public health officials

- Follow your local flu situation through close communication with state and local health officials.
 - Local Health Department contact information
 - https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/
 - NYSDOH's Seasonal Influenza Page
 - <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/>
 - NYSDOH's Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report
 - <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/surveillance/>
 - Update plans so that they are in place before an outbreak occurs.

