



111 North County Farm Road, Wheaton, Illinois 60187

(630) 682-7400

[www.dupagehealth.org](http://www.dupagehealth.org)

May 1, 2009

Dear DuPage County School and Child Care Center Parents, Families, and Staff:

With the confirmed presence of swine influenza in DuPage County and other communities in Illinois, **we would like to provide you with some information** to increase awareness of disease recognition and reporting, to emphasize the importance of prevention through healthy habits, and most importantly, **to help control and prevent the spread of influenza in the community.** As this situation evolves, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the DuPage County Health Department are all closely monitoring disease activity, severity, and scope, in order to provide current recommendations and guidance for our community. **We are best advised to remain calm but alert to what we can do to prevent illness.**

Swine influenza, or swine flu (H1N1 flu), is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus. Seasonal flu symptoms include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, and coughing. Reported swine flu symptoms also include runny nose/nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The spread of this swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.

If you are returning from travel to Mexico, other affected areas, or have been in contact with someone who is sick, pay close attention to your health. If you become sick with a fever plus a cough, sore throat or have trouble breathing, contact your physician. **Stay home if you are sick for 7 days from the onset date of your symptoms**, unless you need medical care. By limiting contact with others as much as possible, you can help prevent the spread of an infectious illness. For information on "Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home," please visit [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm).

Since influenza is primarily spread by direct contact with nose and throat secretions, persons may reduce their chances of becoming sick with swine flu with **a few simple actions**:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw it away after use.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Do not share eating utensils or drinking containers. Persons should not share straws, cups, glasses, water bottles used during sports or recreation, cigarettes, etc.
- 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, school, and public gatherings for 7 days to prevent infecting others, who may be at greater risk for complications.

For more swine flu information and updates, please visit [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/) or call 1-800-CDCINFO. For materials in Spanish, please visit [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/). You may also visit the DuPage County Health Department Emergency Information webpage at [www.protectdupage.org](http://www.protectdupage.org). For general questions about swine flu, please call the DuPage County Health Department at **630-682-7400**. To report a suspect or known case of swine flu, please call 630-682-7979, ext. 7553.

Sincerely,

THE DUPAGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Rashmi Chugh, M.D., M.P.H.  
Medical Officer

Maureen McHugh  
Executive Director

*Everyone, Everywhere, Everyday*

In an emergency go to [www.protectdupage.org](http://www.protectdupage.org) and tune into WDCB 90.9 fm radio.