

Schools/Child Care Facilities and Swine Influenza

Questions & Answers

What is Swine Influenza?

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses cause high levels of illness and low death rates in pigs. Swine influenza viruses may circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans. The classical swine flu virus (an influenza type A H1N1 virus) was first isolated from a pig in 1930.

What are the current recommendations for ill students at DuPage County Schools/Child Care Facilities?

Currently there is no special guidance for handling of ill students or staff at schools and/or Childcare Facilities at this time for DuPage County Illinois. Similar to other situations, all children who are ill or showing signs and symptoms of flu-like illness should be sent home and instructed to visit and healthcare provider for assessment, testing and treatment if needed.

Should students with a recent travel history to Mexico attend school?

Yes, students, children, and staff, at this time, should not be excluded due to recent travel to Mexico or any other affected area. The CDC does recommend for persons experiencing symptoms consistent with swine flu and have traveled to an affected area, or have been exposed to someone possibly infected with swine flu, during the last 7 days should report their illnesses to their health care provider immediately and inform them of their recent travel.

What precautions should our school/childcare facility take to prevent the spread of disease?

Everyone should be taking the following precautions to prevent the spread of disease:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash you hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Are special cleaning precautions recommended?

Environmental cleaning as a part of a regular routine including cleaning of "high touch surfaces" is recommended during regular influenza season and at other times of high incidence of illness in order to cut down on the number of germs that might be transmitted through environmental objects such as door knobs, hand rails, drinking fountains and other surfaces. Products that eliminate or "kill" influenza should always be used according to their label with safety precautions.

For further information please visit www.protectdupage.org