

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Some children at your child's school have had symptoms of influenza (flu). Your child may have come in contact with these children. Interior Health would like to share important information with you about flu.

Flu germs spread from person to person mainly through the coughing or sneezing of a sick person. Flu germs may also be spread when a person touches something that has the germs on it and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth.

To prevent the spread of germs:

- ◆ Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 15 seconds.
- ◆ Cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of the elbow.
- ◆ Stay at least two metres (six feet) away from people who are sick.

The symptoms of influenza are:

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Cough
- ◆ Sore throat
- ◆ Body aches
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Chills and fatigue
- ◆ Sometimes, vomiting (throwing up) and diarrhea ("the runs")

Most people who get the flu recover quickly. People with other health problems such as asthma and diabetes may be more ill.

If your child is sick:

- ◆ Keep them at home from school until all symptoms have gone, unless they need medical attention. Let the school know that they are sick and what symptoms they have.
- ◆ Take their temperature daily.
- ◆ Have them drink plenty of liquids such as water, juice and soup.
- ◆ Have them rest.
- ◆ For fever, sore throat, and body aches, use fever-reducing medicines that the nurse, pharmacist or doctor recommends. Do not use aspirin.
- ◆ Keep tissues and a garbage bag for the used tissues close by the sick child.

Seek medical care if you are concerned about your child or if your child has any of the following:

- ◆ A rapid change in the illness such as higher fevers or painful ears
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Seek emergency care if your child has any of the following:

- ◆ Fast breathing or has a hard time breathing, wheezing or coughing up blood
- ◆ Chest pain
- ◆ Bluish or grey skin colour or lip colour
- ◆ Not drinking enough fluids
- ◆ Not waking up, unusually quiet or unresponsive, having strange thoughts or actions
- ◆ Not urinating (peeing) or no tears when crying, gets dizzy when they stand up
- ◆ New onset of vomiting (throwing up), diarrhea ("the runs") or abdominal (tummy) pain

Call ahead to let them know you are coming and what your child's symptoms are.

Call HealthLink BC at **8-1-1**, 24 hours a day/seven days a week to speak to a nurse if you have questions or are concerned about any illness.

For the latest facts on the flu, visit <http://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-safety.aspx?id=9028> or [www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1](http://www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1). For information on looking after someone at home with H1N1 flu virus go to <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/h1n1/guidance-orientation-05-03-eng.php> .