

## H1N1 Quick Reference Guide

Compiled by the Maine CDC for school personnel

Assure the school community has access to seasonal flu vaccine and H1N1 flu vaccine when it arrives.

Contact Maine CDC (1-888-257-0990) for information on hosting school-located vaccine clinics. These clinics will assure Maine's children will receive vaccine as early and as efficiently as possible, which will reduce the impact flu will have on a school and on our children's learning. We will communicate on specifics of H1N1 vaccine when more details are known.

Report elevated absenteeism or school closure due to illness.

Contact Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821 or [disease.reporting@maine.gov](mailto:disease.reporting@maine.gov) if a sudden increase in absenteeism from influenza-like-illness is noted among students and/or staff. Infectious Disease Epidemiologists will respond and provide guidance on disease monitoring and control. Schools are also asked to report when they are considering closing due to illness.

Stay home when sick: Those with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.

For more information, see CDC Recommendations for the Amount of Time Persons with Influenza-Like Illness Should be Away from Others

See the Technical Report for more details about staying home when sick

Separate ill students and staff.

Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness should be sent to a room separate from others until they can be sent home. CDC recommends that they wear a surgical mask, if possible, and that those who care for ill students and staff wear protective gear such as a mask.

See the Technical Report for more details about separating ill students and staff

Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

The new recommendations emphasize the importance of the basic foundations of influenza prevention: stay home when sick, wash hands frequently with soap and water when possible, and cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available).

See the Technical Report for more details about hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette

#### Routine cleaning.

School staff should routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with the cleaners they typically use. CDC does not believe any additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond the recommended routine cleaning is required.

See the Technical Report for more details about routine cleaning

#### Early treatment of high-risk students and staff.

People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible. Early treatment with antiviral medications is very important for people at high risk because it can prevent hospitalizations and deaths. People at high risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.

See the Technical Report for more details about early treatment

#### Consideration of selective school dismissal.

Although there are not many schools where all or most students are at high risk (for example, schools for medically fragile children or for pregnant students) a community might decide to dismiss such a school to better protect these high-risk students.

See the Technical Report for more details about selective school dismissal

#### If the severity of H1N1 increases.

Maine and US CDC may recommend additional measures to protect students and staff. These measures include active screening of students and staff for fever and other symptoms every morning; allowing some high-risk students and staff members to stay home; asking students with an ill household member to stay home for 5 days and more if they become ill; increasing social distancing of students such as further separation of desks and canceling activities that bring children from different schools or classes together; considering extending the period sick people stay home to 7 days; and dismissing school altogether.

Stay Informed

State of Maine Flu Website has tools for Educators and School Administrators including information on seasonal and H1N1 vaccine

Call Maine CDC at 1-888-257-0990 Monday – Friday 9am-5pm for consultation on school-located vaccine clinics

Call Maine CDC clinical consultation line at 1-800-821-5821 24x7 for disease control advice

Sign up to receive Maine CDC health advisories and weekly Maine CDC H1N1 updates

U.S. CDC School Communication Toolkit (has sample letters to parents, printable posters, etc)