



## **Important Information Concerning H1N1 (Swine Flu)**

Following is some valuable information about H1N1 (Swine Flu) from the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) that we feel would be of benefit to everyone. Many of the good practices outlined below pertain to all types of influenza.

### ***What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1 in people?***

The symptoms of H1N1 in people are similar to the symptoms of common influenza and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths were reported with H1N1 infection in people. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

### ***How does H1N1 spread?***

Spread of this H1N1 virus is thought to happen 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. In addition, it is possible for a person to become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching his or her mouth or nose.

### ***What should I do if I get sick?***

If you live in areas where H1N1 cases are identified and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, you should contact your health care provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

If you are sick, you should **stay home and avoid contact with other people** as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

If you become ill and experience any of the warning signs listed below, seek emergency medical care.

In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- 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 improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

***What should I do to keep from getting the flu?***

First and most important - ***wash your hands***. Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Try not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

***How long can viruses live outside the body?***

We know that some viruses and bacteria can live two hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, keyboards, and desks. Frequent hand washing will help you reduce the chance of getting contamination from these common surfaces.

***What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?***

A vaccine is currently being developed for H1N1 but is not available for mass inoculation. There are everyday actions that will help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses such as influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if tissue is not available) when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your 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.

***What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?***

If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school if ill. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Clean your hands after every time you cough or sneeze.

***What is the best technique for washing my hands to avoid getting the flu?***

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. Wash with soap and water. Or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner. We recommend that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds (roughly the amount of time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice ☺). When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

## **Boulder Country Day's Efforts**

BCD is committed to keeping our children safe and healthy by taking precautions already built into our daily routine and initiating new ones for as long as necessary.

- Faculty, staff and administration will be vigilant in identifying students and other staff who appear to have symptoms of the flu.
- Hand sanitizers are located in each classroom and around campus for use by students, faculty and parents where soap and water are not available for use.
- Desks, door knobs, water fountains and other high volume surfaces with which students and teachers touch are disinfected several times during the day.
- All students, faculty and family are asked to use hand sanitizer upon entering the computer lab and library.
- Teachers remind students about the appropriate means of covering their nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze and encourage students to wash hands throughout the day.
- We regularly monitor the CDC website as well as the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) website (<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us>).
- We will immediately notify parents if any BCD student or faculty member is positively diagnosed with the H1N1 virus.

- Students who appear to have flu-like symptoms will be separated from others until they can be sent home. To this end, we have created a small sick bay in the workroom of the Admin Building for this purpose.
- Teachers will make an effort to increase distance between people at schools.
  - Boulder Country Day may need to cancel classes but this will only be done after careful consideration and consultation with Children's Hospital. In this unlikely scenario, every resource will be utilized to continue the education of our children.

## **BCD Parents' Responsibilities**

As a community, we must work together to try to prevent this disease from affecting our families. Please help by doing the following:

- Keep your child at home if he/she is exhibiting flu-like symptoms. He/she should stay at 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 at home even if they are using antiviral drugs.
- Notify the School Receptionist, immediately if your child is diagnosed with influenza (H1N1 virus).
- Students who have an ill household member should stay home for five days from the day the first household member got sick.

In addition, please help us by implementing and reminding your child of the following precautions.

- To cover his/her mouth and/or nose when coughing or sneezing.
- To wash hands often with soap and water (Happy Birthday twice!), especially after coughing or sneezing.
- To not share drink or food with their classmates.