What You Need to Know About the Flu

What is the flu?
Influenza (the flu) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by influenza viruses. There are many different influenza viruses that are constantly changing. Flu illness can vary from mild to severe. It can be especially dangerous for young children and children of any age with certain long term health conditions, including asthma.

How does the flu spread?
Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses or people who are nearby.

Recommended Preventive Actions For Flu:
• Encourage students, parents and staff to get a yearly flu vaccine
• Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Alcohol based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol may be used
• Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
  ✓ Throw tissues away after use, and wash your hands
  ✓ If a tissue is not available, cough into your elbow, not your hand
• Disinfect often-touched surfaces such as desks, keyboards, and door handles, especially if someone is sick
• Try to avoid close contact with sick people
• Stay home if you are sick and until at least 24 hours after a fever of 100 degrees or above has subsided without the use of a fever reducing medicine, i.e. Tylenol, Advil, etc.

Flu Symptoms and Emergency Warning Signs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever (not always)</td>
<td>Headache</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Chills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
<td>Tiredness/Fatigue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Runny or Stuffy Nose</td>
<td>Diarrhea (sometimes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body Aches</td>
<td>Vomiting (sometimes)</td>
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EMERGENCY warning signs that indicate a child should get immediate medical care:
• Fast breathing or trouble breathing
• Bluish skin color
• Not drinking enough fluids
• Not waking up or interacting
• Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
• Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough
• Fever with rash

Can my child go to school if he or she is sick?
• No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid spreading the flu to others. Keep your child home if he is sick and until at least 24 hours after a fever of 100 degrees or above has subsided without the use of a fever reducing medicine, i.e. Tylenol, Advil, etc.

Your fellow students and teachers will understand that you are ill and unable to attend school. Check with the teacher regarding make-up work and school policy.

To find a flu vaccine clinic near you, please visit Health Map Vaccine Finder

For more information, please visit the CDC website, A Flu Guide for Parents

Be well!