

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT 50

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April 29, 2009

SWINE FLU OUTBREAK INFORMATION

With the ever changing dynamics of Swine Flu cases being reported in the United States, please know that the school nurses and administration of SAU 50 are being updated on a regular basis by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services on procedural guidelines for evaluating possible flu-like symptoms. In an effort to be as proactive and as precautionary as possible, we ask that all families in SAU 50 speak with their children about alerting their school nurses should they feel ill at school. As always, we encourage you to view our website for updated information (www.sau50.org) or your school's website.

Additional information will be sent home from the schools.

**Please see the advisory below from the
New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services**

ADVISORY ON SWINE FLU OUTBREAK

The New Hampshire (NH) Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is increasing its surveillance efforts in response to cases of swine influenza in the United States. On Sunday, April 26, the federal government declared a public health emergency in order to more readily provide support for ongoing state efforts. At this time (April 26, 2009), **there are no confirmed cases of swine influenza in New Hampshire.**

Please refer to the CDC website for daily updates on the outbreak and publication of interim guidance at: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS Communicable Disease Control and Surveillance Section at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).

Actions you can take:

- **If you or your child has recently returned from an affected geographic area,** monitor for symptoms of influenza for seven days after returning. If symptoms occur, call your healthcare provider for evaluation (be sure to mention your recent travel history).
- **If you or your child is sick, stay home from work or school until you are better.** Keep sick people away from people who are not sick.
- **Tell your school nurse** or administrator about your child's symptoms so they can watch for other students with the same symptoms.
- **Wash your hands well and often.** Make sure your children do the same. Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- **If you can't wash with soap and water,** use a hand sanitizer. (Gels, rubs or hand wipes with at least 60% alcohol)
- **Remind children** to keep their hands away from their face – don't touch mouth, nose, or eyes.

- **Cover your cough.** Teach your children to do the same. Cough into the inside of your elbow, or into a tissue — not your hands!
- **Throw away used tissues** or hand sanitizer wipes. Teach your children to throw away tissues and then wash hands.
- **Don't share** water bottles, utensils, cups, food, etc. with others.
- **If people in your home are sick** with the flu and cannot see a healthcare provider, care for them at home — Give plenty of liquids (clear fluids with electrolytes). If you are unsure what over-the-counter medications can be safely used to reduce symptoms, if the ill person is having difficulty breathing, or if they are getting worse, call a healthcare provider.
- **You can disinfect hard surfaces** in your home with a solution made of one ounce bleach to one gallon of water.

For now, school will stay open — At this time, the NH Department of Health and Human Services tells us that students who are not ill can safely come to school, even students with history of travel to affected geographic areas as long as they don't have symptoms.

If the swine flu continues to spread in the U.S. and if it causes severe illness, closing of schools may be considered. The purpose of closing schools is to slow the spread of flu from person-to-person by keeping children at home and away from others.

It's important to keep informed about what's happening. You can get more information from:

NH Department of Health and Human Services

http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/DHHS_SITE/default.htm

- NH Department of Health and Human Services Communicable Disease Section: 603-271-4496.
- Swine Influenza Hotline: 1-888-330-6764

The federal government keeps current information for individuals and families at

www.pandemicflu.gov