



HAYWOOD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Environmental Health

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Carmine F. Rocco, M.S., Health Director

August 18, 2009

Dear Parents,

Over the summer, the H1N1 flu virus has appeared in our area. We need your help to keep the flu from spreading. We are working with Haywood County Schools to monitor and recommend actions that will help reduce the spread of flu in our schools and community. **If your child becomes ill with flu like symptoms, especially a fever over 100 degrees, please keep them at home to avoid spreading the virus and contact your doctor for advice.** If you don't have a doctor, contact an Urgent Care Center. If your child has trouble breathing or other serious symptoms, seek Emergency Medical Care.

Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees F), cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with H1N1 flu, including muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Flu spreads easily. If you think your child is getting the flu, it is important that they remain at home and do not socialize with friends at places like the mall or sporting events where other people would be exposed to flu germs. To prevent the spread of H1N1, anyone with the symptoms listed above should stay home for 24 hours after they are free of fever (when not taking fever-reducing drugs).

It is also important to practice good hygiene to protect oneself and others from infection. Encourage all your family members:

- To wash their hands often. Washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is best (that's about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- To use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Gels and hand wipes containing 60% alcohol work well. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Always read and follow label instructions when using hand sanitizer.
- To keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- To cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve—not your hands!
- To be vaccinated once flu vaccine is available. Flu clinics will be announced in the media.

You may get more information on line by going to www.flu.gov, www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/gcdc/flu.html, or www.haywoodnc.net. For an automated recording with the latest flu information, call the Haywood County Health Department Flu Hotline at 356-1111. I hope your children have a healthy and successful school year. Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Carmine F. Rocco, MS
Health Director