

# H1N1 Information Sheet for Big Sandy School District

## **What Is It?**

Novel H1N1 (also known as swine flu) is a new contagious flu and is spreading fast globally. It continues to be a relatively mild in healthy people.

## **Who Is At Risk for More Significant Illness or Complications?**

People age 65 and older, children and young adults (ages 0- 24), pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions.

## **How does it spread?**

It is spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing or by touching something with mucus or germs on it and touching your face, nose, or mouth. An infected person is infectious one day before they show symptoms and for 5 to 7 days after. It is NOT spread by eating pork.

## **Symptoms:**

Symptoms come on suddenly!

Watch for the following symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting (especially in children).

## **Emergency Warning Signs for Children and Adults:**

The sick person should see a doctor immediately if they have any of the following:

- Fast Breathing
- Difficulty breathing
- Bluish or grey skin color
- Cannot drink enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Will not wake up or not interacting
- Too irritable to be held
- Cannot urinate or in only very small amounts, no tears when crying
- Symptoms worsen or symptoms improve when return

If anyone has a pre-existing health condition such as: asthma, diabetes, or pregnancy

**Prevention:**

- Wash hands often and scrub for about 20 seconds
- Do not put hands/fingers in mouth, eyes, or nose
- Use a hand sanitizer with alcohol as the main ingredient. It should be 60 to 95 percent alcohol
- Use hand sanitizer as directed to be effective
- Cough or sneeze into elbow or tissue

**How can we protect ourselves at home?**

- ✓ Teach your child to practice good hygiene
- ✓ Keep your sick family member home until symptom free for 24 hours without fever or reducing medications.
- ✓ Keep sick family member away from non-sick family members.
- ✓ DO NOT use aspirin containing products as fever reducer (especially for children/adolescents aspirin increases the risk of complication in viral illness).
- ✓ Sanitize frequently touched surfaces at home.
- ✓ Prepare for the possibility of extended stay at home: groceries, medication supplies, etc.
- ✓ Avoid close contact with any person who appears to be ill.
- ✓ Report symptoms to school when calling in a students absence.
- ✓ If ill maintain hydration by drinking clear liquids.

### **How can we protect ourselves and our children at school?**

- Students with illness symptoms will be sent home.
- Students with illness symptoms will be isolated if at all possible.
- Reinforce hand washing and use hand sanitizers.
- Sanitize or disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.
- Collect symptom information when absences are reported at school or work.
- Ask the health department about reported symptoms and absence numbers.
- Call the health department regarding vaccine clinic dates and follow up if cluster illness is occurring.
- The closure of school will be determined by administration.
- Get the H1N1 Vaccine; it should be available sometime in October.
- The cost of the shot is unknown at this time: Elbert County Nursing services are anticipating approximately \$15 to \$20 a shot.
- Vaccine is a 2 dose series with a booster given at 21 to 28 days after 1<sup>st</sup> shot (babies less than 6 months old cannot take the vaccine). *It is inadvisable to take the H1N1 vaccine if you have an egg allergy.*
- Vaccine administration will be prioritized then available to general public.
- Do not forget to take the seasonal flu vaccine

### **Do you have more questions? Use the following resources:**

- ❖ [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- ❖ Elbert [303-621-3344] or El Paso [719-578-3199] County Health Departments
- ❖ Colorado department of Public Health and Environment

Brought to you by the Big Sandy School Health Class and the school nurse.

