



# COVENTRY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Parent/Guardian

Welcome back to another exciting school year. We are happy that your child will be joining us at Coventry Public Schools. Last school year (2008-2009), we are sure that you heard about the novel H1N1 influenza strain. We wanted to update and remind you about some important information related to this issue. We know that the most effective way to protect people from the flu and other illnesses is to keep sick people away from healthy people. So if your child is sick, you must keep your child home. Staying home when sick stops the spread of the flu and other illnesses and helps the sick person get well.

**Check your child every morning before sending him or her to school:**

| <b>If your child has both:</b>   | <b>Then you must:</b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>Fever*</b> (100° F or 37. 7°C) <b>AND sore throat or cough.</b> These symptoms suggest influenza-like illness. Your child may have the flu. Other symptoms can include runny nose, body aches, vomiting and diarrhea. | <u>CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are fever free (100°F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.</u> |
| <b>But if your child only has:</b>   | <b>Then you must:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fever* alone, OR</b></li><li>• <b>vomiting or diarrhea, OR</b></li><li>• <b>sore throat or new cough with no fever</b></li></ul>  | Keep your child home from school and child care until symptoms are gone for 24 hours.   |

\*If you don't have a thermometer, feel your child's forehead with your hand. If it is much warmer than usual your child probably has a fever.

If your child comes to school with the symptoms of flu, as described in the top box above, or if your child develops these symptoms when they get to school, your child will be sent home for at least 24 hours after they are fever free (100°F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.\*\*


Also, as a reminder, now would be a good time to consider what arrangements you would need to make to assure that your child is safe at home when they are sick. They should not be sent to another child care setting where they would be interacting with other people who are not sick.

The district, through our school nurse offices will be monitoring for influenza-like illness in the schools and will consult with Robert Miller, Director of Health, Eastern Highlands Health District to assure you that we have the health and safety of your children as our number one priority. We will keep you informed as to any changes in practice during the school year.

Thank you for helping us to keep the school environment as healthy as possible for all students and staff. If we follow the guidance provided we will all have an exciting and successful school year.

\*\*Guidance on how long to keep a child with flu symptoms home is subject to change. For the most updated information, visit the Connecticut Flu Watch website at <http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch>.

Sincerely,

  
Donna Bernard, Ph.D.