



Health and Healthy Living

Public Health Division

Office of the Chief Public Health Officer

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Manitoba is seeing a growing number of confirmed H1N1 influenza and we know H1N1 is present across the province. However, most of the individuals who have become ill have experienced relatively less-serious cases of influenza illness and have not required hospitalization. Although the number of people with more severe illness has increased, this still represents a small percentage of the cases in Manitoba.

The most effective way to reduce the spread of influenza in schools is to minimize contact between ill and well people, by having students who develop illness go home promptly. However, there has been no public health reason to close schools, child care centres or other places where children come together. Children who are feeling well can continue with regular activities such as attending school and should take the same precautions as adults, including washing their hands regularly with soap and water and covering their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Young children may need help with hand-washing.

If your child becomes ill, they should stay home from school or child care for about one week, and try to limit their contact with other people. For your information, we have included a fact sheet on *Self Care for Influenza* that provides further guidance on how to care for people with influenza, including children. We also invite you to share the fact sheet *Information about H1N1 Flu for Children and Youth* with your children, so that they gain a better understanding about the disease and prevention measures.

If you have questions or are concerned that your child may need care, please phone Health Links–Info Santé at any time at 788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257. For the latest information and resources, please visit the Manitoba government website at: www.gov.mb.ca/flu/index.html

Sincerely,

Elise Weiss, MD, FCFP, MSc

A/Medical Lead – Emergency Preparedness