

Nurses' Nook..Important information about school attendance!

There's an old cliché, "Desperate times call for desperate measures" and while we're not exactly desperate we are in the midst of an influenza epidemic. Influenza is a serious illness and can have devastating consequences. In fact, as of early January, eighteen (18) people in our state had died from complications related to the flu.

In light of this widespread flu, we ask all members of our community to consider the following helpful guidelines when trying to decide whether or not to send your child to school:

- If your child has a fever he or she should stay home. He or she should be isolated as much as possible from the rest of the family members to minimize spread.
- If the fever is accompanied by flu-like symptoms (cough, body aches, fatigue, chills, and maybe a stuffy/runny nose) your child should stay home and you should contact your health care provider immediately. If diagnosed within the first 48 hours of onset of flu, antiviral medication can help fight off the illness.
- Your child should not return to school until he or she has been fever free for 24 hours. This fever measurement should be done at least 10 hours after the person has taken any type of anti-fever medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil). This is usually 5-7 days after onset of flu symptoms.
- Sending a child with the flu or flu-like symptoms to school may compromise his/her health, as well as the health and well-being of others - including students/staff with weakened immune systems.

Attention to these guidelines, in keeping with recommendations from medical professionals, will help to keep our school community members as healthy as possible.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance record, please call your child's school nurse, guidance counselor or a school administrator.

As always questions about this topic will be welcomed by the nurse in your child's school.