



Kalamazoo County

Health & Community Services

Linda Vail Buzas, MPA
Director, Health Officer

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Dear Parent:

The H1N1 flu season is in full swing in Kalamazoo County. This year to date, our numbers of children sick with the flu have greatly increased from previous years. We are asking that parents take steps to help minimize the spread of this disease by encouraging frequent hand washing, covering your cough, and staying out of public places when ill.

The symptoms of H1N1 influenza, which may appear from one to three days after exposure, typically include fever above 100°, cough, sore throat, achiness, headache, chills and fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. **If you or your child have these symptoms or develop these symptoms at any time, please stay home.** Call your physician if your symptoms worsen or if you have concerns. **If your child has a fever, he/she must stay at home for 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of Tylenol or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin).**

If your child is at school and develops these symptoms, he/she will be isolated in a room separate from others in the school until the secretary is able to contact a parent or guardian and they can be taken home. It is very important for the school to know the best way to contact you either at your work or at home. Please make sure they have your most current phone numbers! When a child is sick, it is always best to get them home as soon as possible, where they can quickly recover from their illness and minimize the spread to others.

H1N1 can be dangerous for a person with an underlying medical condition—such as asthma or diabetes—or if you're pregnant. So far, this flu has been most contagious among children and young adults ages six months to 24 years. Some precautions to take are simple and personal: make it a routine to wash your hands often with soap and water. Cough into your elbow or into a tissue, not in your hands. **Stay home if you are sick, and start planning now in the event that one of your kids gets the flu.** Get your seasonal influenza immunization and the H1N1 immunization when it becomes available.

If you have a fever, please stay away from infants, immune-compromised individuals, and pregnant women, who are at greatest risk from severe complications of H1N1 influenza. If you have questions, please contact your physician. You can also consult our web page at www.kalcounty.com/hcs/parents.htm (scroll down for H1N1 information); and/or call the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services hotline at 373-5300 for the most current information.

Sincerely,

Linda Vail Buzas, MPA
Director, Health Officer

Richard M. Tooker MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer

