

Las Lomas School District
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September 23, 2009

Dear Parents and Staff,

I know that you've been hearing in the news different messages concerning the H1N1 (swine flu) virus and the upcoming flu season. Here are some official updates that reflect the latest advice from our county health officials, who are in direct contact with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

- Major symptoms of H1N1 include a fever higher than 100 F (37.8° C) and one or more of the following: cough, sore throat, headache or muscle ache.
- Parents should keep their children home from school when they have a fever and exhibit one or more of these symptoms.
- Staff with these symptoms should not come to work, and staff who exhibit symptoms at work will be sent home.
- Students who exhibit flu symptoms will be promptly separated from other students and staff and will be sent home as soon as possible. Parents should be aware that they must be available to pick up their children promptly if they become sick while they are attending school.
- Students or staff who have had flu-like illnesses should remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F) without use of fever-reducing medications.
- Those who belong to high risk groups for the H1N1 virus, such as pregnant women, individuals with asthma, diabetes, or heart disease and people who are immunosuppressed, should consult with their medical providers regarding steps they should take to prevent and/or treat the illness.
- It is recommended that individuals get seasonal flu shots from their health providers or other sources of their choice, as soon as possible.
- The H1N1 vaccine is expected later in the fall, and it is recommended that individuals follow the guidance that will be made available at that time regarding who should get these vaccinations.
- School staff will take appropriate steps to prevent the spread of disease by teaching students about and practicing frequent hand washing, coughing or sneezing into a tissue or the bend of the elbow (students are calling this the "Dracula sneeze"), and avoiding touching their eyes, nose or mouth to avoid the spread of germs.
- School districts are no longer contemplating school closures in the event students or staff come down with H1N1. Experience last spring has shown that this strain is not as dangerous as first suspected and in fact may be less dangerous than normal seasonal flu.

- Schools are not sending out "Exposure Notices" when teachers become aware of suspected cases of H1N1 or seasonal flu.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If the Health System knows of a student with H1N1, will schools be notified? If a school has a student with H1N1, should the County Health System be notified?

A: Current protocol does not require that the Health System notify schools/districts of cases of confirmed or probable H1N1, nor are schools required to notify the Health System if they learn of confirmed or probable cases in their schools.

Q: Are private physicians required to report a confirmed or suspected case to the school?

A: No, their responsibility is to the patient and the family.

Q: When a school administrator becomes aware of a case of H1N1, what obligation does s/he have to report it to other parents?

A: There are no reporting requirements. In the interest of protecting the privacy of the student and family, notification to the parent community in general is not recommended. We know that the H1N1 virus is in the community and we need to encourage prevention of the spread of the virus, using the same measures recommended for the prevention of the spread of seasonal flu.

Q: Should the sibling of a child with confirmed or probable H1N1 attend school?

A: If the sibling is symptom-free, s/he should attend school. Any child with influenza flu-like symptoms as described above should be kept home.

Q: What guidelines can parents use to determine if their child should be kept home from school?

A: Students should be kept home if they have a fever of 100° F or higher, and one or more of the following symptoms: cough, sore throat, headache or muscle ache. These same guidelines apply to staff.

Q: When is it safe for students/staff to return to school?

A: Recently revised (August 13, 2009) guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control recommend that anyone with flu-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F) or signs of a fever without fever-reducing medications.

For more details on how to prevent H1N1 flu (swine flu), visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/ga.htm>
For more information on H1N1 and for links to the CDC pages on these topics, please click [here](#).

If you have further questions about our schools' approach towards H1N1 flu or towards the seasonal flu, contact a school administrator or me; we will be monitoring county and CDC recommendations and adjusting accordingly.

Sincerely,

Eric Hartwig
Superintendent

