

## Wachusett Regional School District Influenza Protocols

In response to recent concerns regarding reports of influenza-like illness (Swine flu), the District provides the following information to families:

- ▶ Swine flu, as any other flu, is spread through coughing, sneezing and contact. If your child appears to have flu-like symptoms, keep him/her home from school. Make an appointment with your child's primary care physician. Keep your child home from school for as long as recommended by the doctor. If your child is feverish, do not medicate him/her and then send him/her to school. Keep your child home and call your primary care physician. Medicating the fever masks symptoms.
- ▶ Per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, there are steps that everyone can take to help prevent getting or spreading any type of influenza:
  1. Practice proper hand washing techniques. This is the best defense against flu. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
  2. Practice good "cough etiquette" by sneezing into a tissue or your elbow instead of your hands. Promptly discard the tissue, and immediately wash your hands.
  3. Avoid close contact with sick persons.
  4. If you become sick, or have flu-like symptoms (aches, fever, fever above 100° F **plus** cough and sore throat, runny nose, sore throat) **STAY HOME** from work or school, and limit contact with others.

**If you have travelled, especially to Mexico, and have flu-like symptoms, contact your primary care physician immediately.** If a provider suspects a patient may be infected with swine flu, DPH has requested that they perform and submit a swab test for laboratory testing.

▶ **In addition, the District will:**

1. Monitor students for symptoms of flu.
2. Call parents/guardians if a child presents with flu-like symptoms. Parents/guardians should then take the child to his/her primary care physician.
3. Review proper hand washing techniques and proper sneeze/cough etiquette.

**The District is monitoring the situation carefully and actions will be directed by guidelines from the MA Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information about seasonal flu, pandemic flu, avian flu and swine flu, please visit the websites listed below or contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at 617-983-6800.**

**U.S. CDC Swine Influenza Website:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/>

**Infection Control and Treatment Guidance:**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/recommendations.htm>

**Massachusetts-Specific Information as well as links to CDC:**

<http://mass.gov/dph>