

What Do You Need to Know about H1N1 Influenza in the School Setting?

November 2009



History of H1N1 Influenza A

- Identified in the United States in April 2009
- First cases assessed by a school nurse!
- Many schools were closed initially
- We are in the second “wave” of the H1N1 Flu before the seasonal flu season
- What do we need to know now?



So much information!

- There is so much information available
 - Media
 - Health organizations
 - Health professionals
 - Relatives and friends
- How do we know what information is valid?



Quality Information for Schools

- New York State Education Department
- New York State Department of Health
- NY Statewide School Health Services Center
- Centers for Disease Control
- US Department of Health and Human Services – Flu.gov
- Your school nurse!



Why is this such a big issue in the school setting?

- Schools are environments where large numbers of people gather on a daily basis - the flu can spread quickly
- Largest number of H1N1 Flu cases have been in people between the ages of 5 and 24 years old



What Are the Signs of H1N1 Flu?

- Fever of 100°F (37.8° C) or greater
- Cough
- Runny Nose
- Sore Throat
- Body aches and fatigue



What do I do if I have signs of H1N1 Flu?

- If you begin to feel sick at school, talk to the nurse right away
- If you have symptoms at home – stay home! Really!
- How long should you stay home?
 - Until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications. A fever is considered 100°F (37.8° C) or greater.



What are the warning signs of a Flu related health emergency?

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Presence of rash
- Not urinating or no tears when crying
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that a child does not want to be held
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Symptoms improve but the return with increased severity



How can we prevent H1N1 Flu in the school setting?

- Educate and encourage students to cover nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze
- Remind student to practice good hand hygiene
- Be a good role model!
- Observe for sick students – send to nurse
- Clean surfaces and items in frequent hand contact
- Teachers should stay home when sick



Questions?

- See your school nurse!
- Check out reliable resources on the Internet –
 - New York Statewide School Health Services Center website:
 - www.schoolhealthservicesny.com
 - H1N1 Flu link on main navigational bar

