



County of Ottawa

Health Department

Lisa Stefanovsky, M. Ed.
Health Officer

Paul Heidel, M.D., M.P.H.
Medical Director

April 30, 2009

Dear Parents,

The Ottawa County Health Department is in the process of providing continual information regarding Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) to our citizens. As you may have heard, cases of Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) have developed worldwide and nationally. Currently, Ottawa County has one confirmed case of Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu). Like seasonal flu, Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) is spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing, or touching an object with the flu virus on it and then touching the nose or mouth.

We realize that any threat of illness can cause fear for both parents and children and we want to share ways that you can remain healthy. We are asking community members to channel their concern into the consistent practice of prevention measures. The following practices are recommended to prevent the spread of Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) in our community:

Wash hands often: Washing hands often with soap and water will help protect against germs. While not a substitution for proper hand washing, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used if needed.

Cover the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing: Cover the mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inner elbow when coughing or sneezing. This will help prevent others from becoming sick.

Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth: Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

Keep a distance: Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Also sick people should keep a distance from well people to prevent the spread.

Keep children home from school when they are sick: This will help prevent others from catching the illness.

As always, if your child has flu-like symptoms that include; fever of over 100 degrees, cough, sore throat, body aches, chills and fatigue, **consult your physician and keep your child home from school.** If your child is ill with flu-like illness, the symptoms **must** be reported immediately to the school attendance office. Your school district is working closely with the Health Department to monitor the risk and assure fast action in the event that there is a case of Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu). If a case does occur, the health department and your school district will take every precaution to assure your child's safety. Immediate information will be provided if a school closure is necessary.

To answer additional questions we have added a number of resources to our website at www.MiOttawa.org. You may also access our information hotline, at 616-494-5575.

Sincerely,

Lisa Stefanovsky, M.Ed.
Health Officer