

FLU Update and Action Steps

- Influenza-like illness is showing up in schools here and most of the flu circulating in Georgia at this time is actually Swine Flu.
- Stay home if you are sick until 24 hours after your fever is gone without using fever reducing medicine. *DO NOT* give aspirin to children with the flu.
- Students and staff who come down with flu symptoms should go to a room separate from others until they can go home.
 - They should wear surgical masks if possible.
 - Those who care for sick students and staff should wear a mask and gloves if possible.
- People at *high risk for flu complications* who become ill with flu symptoms or are in close contact with someone with flu symptoms should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible.
 - *People at high risk include:*
 - Those who are pregnant
 - Have asthma or diabetes
 - Have immune systems that don't work well
 - Or have chronic illnesses like kidney disease, heart disease or cancer.
- Early treatment with antiviral medications is very important for people at high risk because it may prevent hospitalizations and deaths.
- Antiviral drugs are prescription pills, liquids or inhalers that fight the flu by keeping the germs from growing in your body. These medicines may make you feel better faster and may make your symptoms milder.
- People at high risk of flu complications should talk to their health care provider about staying home from school when lots of flu is circulating in the community.
- Fight the flu by
 - Washing hands often with soap and water
 - Using alcohol-based hand sanitizer
 - Covering coughs and sneezes
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
- At this point, whether you are tested and actually diagnosed with Novel H1N1 flu is MUCH less important than what you do if you become sick. Quick flu test results are not 100 percent accurate and *do not* differentiate between seasonal influenza A and swine flu (Novel Influenza A H1N1).
- Home care for people with flu symptoms:
 - Check with their health care provider about special care they may need if they have an underlying health condition.
 - Make sure patients get lots of rest.
 - Patients should drink plenty of clear liquids so they won't get dehydrated.
 - Patients should wear a mask if possible so they won't pass flu germs to the rest of the household.
 - If symptoms include difficulty breathing, vomiting and can't hold down liquids or if flu-like symptoms get better then return with high fever and worse cough, emergency medical attention is needed right away.
 - **DO NOT take aspirin!**