

Dear Parent(s)

We have seen an increase in absenteeism due to influenza-like illness. We have been working closely with Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health to monitor and contain this outbreak.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness and can cause mild to severe illness. Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health wants you to know that the best way to protect yourself and your family against the flu is by getting a yearly flu vaccination.

In addition, you can take everyday precautions to help stop the spread of germs:

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people and when you're sick, limit your contact with others.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with flu germs.
- Stay home when you're sick. Do not send sick children to school. People with the flu, or influenza-like illness should remain at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

Influenza symptoms can include: fever, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, fatigue (tiredness), diarrhea and vomiting.

Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications. Studies show that flu antiviral drugs work best for treatment when they are started within 2 days of getting sick, but starting them later can still be helpful, especially if the sick person has a high-risk health condition or is very sick from the flu.

If you feel you need to seek medical attention, please contact your health care provider.

Sincerely,

[School Information]

Additional resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/index.html>