

## H1N1 Flu Information



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Van Vleck ISD is taking the threat of an outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus in our community seriously. Consistent with the district's infection control program, school nurses will be monitoring student illness and teachers will be stressing the importance of good hygiene practices such as hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes.

**To help prevent the spread of the flu viruses, the CDC is recommending that students who do exhibit flu-like symptoms (fever with a cough or sore throat) should not attend school for at least 24 hours after fever is gone. Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.**

As a parent, you can help by reinforcing these good hygiene practices with your children at home. The CDC recommends the following steps in order to slow down the spread of influenza:

- Students who are ill should stay home. Students have to be free of fever for at least 24 hours before they return to school.
- Avoid close contact
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Wash your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Stay healthy, get rest, and drink plenty of water

If you have reason to be concerned that you or your child may have the flu, please contact your family doctor as soon as possible. The H1N1 flu virus can only be diagnosed by a medical professional. If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

Van Vleck ISD will continue to keep parents informed of developments and the district's efforts to keep students healthy and safe at school.

## 24 Hour Rule

In addition to the CDC's guidance on keeping students who exhibit flu-like symptoms home at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of fever, Van Vleck ISD Administrative Regulation FFAD is in place to ensure the health and safety of all students and states that students who exhibit vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever greater than 100.4, must be excluded from school. Re-admittance is allowable as follows:

- Child's temperature less than 100.4 for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Common trade names of products containing these medications include, but are not limited to Tylenol, Motrin, and Advil. All aspirin-containing products should be avoided.
- Food and liquids have been tolerated for at least 24 hours without vomiting and/or diarrhea, and without the use of medication to relieve symptoms.
- Students diagnosed with a contagious illness that is being treated with prescription medication, must complete a minimum of 24 hours of the prescribed dosage prior to returning to school.

**Please be aware that a doctor's note does not supersede the 24 hour rule.**

## Flu Signs & Symptoms

The symptoms of H1N1 (swine) flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 (swine) flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with H1N1 (swine) flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 (swine) flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

**In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:**

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

*\* Information from CDC Web site [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).*

## What you can do

As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to reduce the spread of flu in Van Vleck ISD. We want to keep our schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season, **but we need your help to do this.**

Here are a few things you can do to help.

- **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
- **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
- **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours *after* they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
- **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home.*