



Dear Parents, Students, and Staff Members of Schools in Davidson County,

Cases of H1N1 influenza continue to be reported in Davidson County. We expect to see more cases here. Most cases have been mild, but the virus can cause complications for some people, so we need to take extra care to reduce the spread of this virus.

When an ill person coughs or sneezes, influenza viruses can spread directly to others through small droplets. The virus can survive for a short time on surfaces and objects, so people can sometimes be infected by touching their mouth, nose or eyes after picking up the virus from a surface. Here is what we all need to do to prevent spread of the virus:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with the crook of your elbow or a tissue.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If water is not near, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.

Students and adults who are sick should NOT come to school. In particular, both staff and students should stay home if they have symptoms of fever (over 100 degrees F) and cough or sore throat or runny nose or body aches. Ill persons must not return to school until 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

The school does not require specific testing for influenza to be done. Parents and staff should contact their medical provider if they have questions or concerns about any illness or if symptoms are severe, but for most people testing is not needed.

Children and adults who have been in contact with an ill person do not need to stay home if they are well. However they should closely monitor their health and stay home if they develop any symptoms. If symptoms develop while at school or work, they should go home immediately.

There are no plans to close any school unless the number of ill persons makes it difficult to stay open. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that we keep well students in school and ill students at home. Parents should develop plans regarding the possibility that they or their child may need to be home for several days.

For more information, please see the Health Department's website: www.health.nashville.gov or call our H1N1 community information telephone number: 340-7775. We'll do everything we can to keep you informed and up to date in the coming weeks and months.

Thanks for your cooperation in preventing the spread of this illness in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Paul".

Bill Paul, MD
Director of Health of Nashville/Davidson County