

HAMPDEN CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

Hampden Charter School of Science
20 Johnson Road Chicopee, MA 01022
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www.hampdencharter.org

October 14, 2009

Dear Parents/Legal Guardians:

As the cold and flu season begins, we are taking all precautions to maintain a clean and healthy environment in the classrooms. We are disinfecting the desks and chairs daily and spraying the classrooms with Lysol.

If your child has a temperature within 24 hours, please do not send them to school. Children need to remain fever, diarrhea and vomit free for 24 hours without the use of medicine (ex. Motrin or Tylenol) before returning to school.

If you receive a positive flu diagnosis from your Doctor, please provide us with this documentation from the Doctor's office. If your child has been out sick and seen by a Doctor, we must have a "return to school" note from the Doctor's office.

The symptoms of this new influenza A H1N1 virus in people are similar to the symptoms of the regular human seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. A significant number of people have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Also, like seasonal flu, severe illnesses and death have occurred as result of illness associated with this virus. Parents please keep your kids home and contact your physician if you observe any of these symptoms.

We also recommend that you child receive the H1N1 vaccine. Many physician offices and clinics will be administering these vaccines and the vaccine should be available within the next several weeks. Please call your child's Physician's office to see when the vaccine will be available.

Please reinforce proper hand washing at home and remind them to do the same in school. It is also important to encourage your child to cover their coughs and sneezes with their elbows and tissues and to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.

We appreciate your help and cooperation with this matter.

HCSS

Swine symptoms include...

Fever

Sore throat

Cough

Body Aches

Headache

Chills

Fatigue

Diarrhea

Vomitting



Is it a cold or the flu?

Cold

The common cold is an upper respiratory infection and can be caused by many different types of viruses. The common cold is a contagious infection which lasts seven to fourteen days.

Fever	Rare in adults and older children, but can be as high as 102°F in infants and small children
Headache	Rare
Muscle aches	Mild
Tiredness/weakness	Mild
Extreme exhaustion	Never
Runny nose	Often
Sneezing	Often
Sore throat	Often
Cough	Mild, hacking cough

The best treatment for a cold is to rest and drink plenty of fluids, especially water. Talk to your doctor about over-the-counter medications which can help you feel better. Antibiotics are not needed to treat a viral infection, such as the common cold. *Never* give aspirin to children or teenagers without first speaking to your healthcare provider.

Flu

Influenza, also known as the flu, is a highly contagious viral infection. The flu affects the lungs and sinuses. A person with influenza can be contagious for about 1 week after symptoms appear.

Fever	Usually 102°F, but can rise to 104°F and usually lasts 3 to 4 days
Headache	Sudden onset, can be severe
Muscle aches	Usual, often severe
Tiredness/weakness	Can last 2 or more weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Sudden onset, can be severe
Runny nose	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes
Sore throat	Sometimes
Cough	Usual, can become severe

If you develop the flu, get plenty of rest, drink a lot of liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco. Over-the-counter medications may relieve symptoms. Antiviral prescription medications are available for treatment of the flu; they last for 5 days and must be started within the first two days of illness. *Never* give aspirin to children or teenagers without first speaking to your healthcare provider. If your flu symptoms are unusually severe (e.g., you're having trouble breathing) consult your healthcare provider right away.

Tips for Preventing Colds & Flu



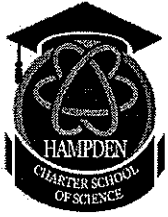
Tips to prevent spreading your germs to others:

- ◆ Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you sneeze or cough.
- ◆ Use a tissue to wipe or blow your nose and quickly throw away used tissues.
- ◆ Stay at home to avoid spreading germs when you have a cough or fever.
- ◆ Follow your doctor's instructions, including taking medicine as prescribed and getting lots of rest.
- ◆ Wear a mask in a medical office, if asked.

Tips to keep germs away:

- ◆ Wash your hands before eating, or touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ◆ Wash your hands after touching anyone who is sneezing, coughing, blowing their nose, or who has a runny nose.
- ◆ Don't share food, utensils, or beverage containers with others.
- ◆ Don't share things like towels, lipstick, toys, cigarettes, or anything else that might be contaminated with respiratory germs.

Viruses and bacteria, the germs that cause respiratory infection, are spread from person to person in droplets when a sick person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Some viruses also can be spread when a person touches a surface with the virus on it (e.g., a door handle) and then touches their nose or mouth.



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A Note from the Nurse

October 5, 2009

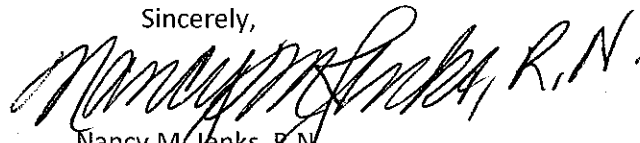
Dear Parents/ Legal Guardians,

As cold and flu season approaches, here are a few reminders:

1. Please continue to encourage your child to wash their hands and use hand sanitizer through out the day especially before eating, after using the bathroom and after blowing their nose. Also please remind your child to cover their coughs and sneezes with their elbows and avoid touching their face-Most germs enter our bodies through our eyes, nose and mouth. These simple steps can have huge effects in cutting down the spread of germs not only at school, but at home and in our community.
2. Please be aware that our policy is that if **your child has a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, your child needs to stay home until they are free of these symptoms for 24 hours**. Many illnesses can still be spread to others during this time.
3. Just to let you know, I will not be at school on Thursday, October 15th. I will be at an all day conference in Central Massachusetts. Should a problem or issue should arise on that day, please contact Mr. Celik or Mr. Topcuoglu.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (413) 593-9090 x 208. Thank you for your help with these matters.

Sincerely,


Nancy M. Jenks, R.N.
HCSS School Nurse