



North Middle School Health News

Influenza

The Flu season is coming, and there are things we all should know!

What are the symptoms of the flu?

- A 100°F or higher fever or feeling feverish (not everyone with the flu has a fever)
- A cough and/or sore throat
- A runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches and/or body aches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

Is it a cold of the flu?

Similar symptoms occur with the flu and the common cold, and it can be difficult to tell the difference. Typically, the flu is worse than the common cold with symptoms such as fever, body aches, tiredness, and cough. A runny or stuffy nose is more likely with the common cold. See your health care provider within the first few days of an illness if you are unsure.

When should I seek emergency medical attention?

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Purple or blue discoloration of the lips
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

WHACK the Flu

- W** Wash your hands often.
- H** Home is where you stay when you are sick.
- A** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- C** Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- K** Keep your distance from people who are coughing and sneezing.



dreamstime.com

Tips for When to Keep Kids Home



- ☺ A fever of 100.4 degrees or higher. Your child should be fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medications before returning to school.
- ☺ A contagious illness such as strep throat, influenza (flu), or chicken pox.
- ☺ Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 12-24 hours.
- ☺ Continuous cough or wheeze
- ☺ Crusty eyes and/or green or yellow drainage from the eyes.
- ☺ Rash that could be contagious. Please have unknown rashes checked by your pediatrician.
- ☺ If your child seems ill, has upper respiratory illness with significant sneezing, coughing, nasal congestion or discharge, or feels ill.



Physical Exams

Students are required to submit a current Physical Exam Report from a licensed provider upon admittance to school and in Grades 4, 7 and 10. If you have a student in one of these grades, and have not submitted a report to your school nurse this year, please do so as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Liz Flaherty, MS, RN, APHN-BC
North Middle School Nurse
Phone: (413)572-6448
Fax: (413) 572-1669
Please feel free to call with any questions or concerns.

Handwashing and Hand Hygiene

Hand washing is an important activity to prevent illness and infection. There are 5 basic steps for kids to remember; Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, & Dry. Please remind students they need to wash their hands many times throughout the day!

How should you wash your hands???

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

If soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer can be used instead; however soap and water is the best first choice!

www.cdc.gov



When should you wash your hands???

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching animals or their food
- After touching garbage

www.cdc.gov

Protocols for Common Illnesses at School

Fever ~ Students with fevers over 100.4 will be dismissed from school and will need to remain home until fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medications.

Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye ~ Students suspected of having conjunctivitis will need to be seen by their health care provider. The student may remain in, or return to, school if there are mild or few symptoms with no visible yellow drainage.

Strep Throat ~ Students diagnosed with strep throat will need to complete a full 24 hours of antibiotics prior to returning to school. This is 24 hours from taking the first dose of medication.

Head Lice ~ Students with live lice will be dismissed from school for treatment. The student must be brought to the health office to be checked by the nurse prior to returning to school and prior to riding the school bus. Students with eggs (nits) only may remain in school and be treated after school.

Medications at School



If your child needs to have medication at school, either prescription or over the counter, we will need a medication order from his or her medical provider as well as a consent form signed by the parent or guardian. If at all possible, medications should be scheduled for times outside of school in order to keep students in the classroom and learning! For everyone's safety, all medications need to be delivered to the nurse in the health office by an adult. Medications cannot be transported by students, delivered to before school program staff, and students may not keep medications in their lockers, backpacks, or desks unless ordered by a medical provider.