

**West Haven Public Schools
School Health Department
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4-30-09

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to share recommendations that have been made about the swine flu. The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) would like to inform you that Connecticut is carefully tracking swine flu. To date, only mild cases of the illness have been reported in the United States.

At this time, state and local health departments advise us that students can continue to attend school, as long as they are not sick and do not have flu-like symptoms. Symptoms include:

- fever (over 100 degrees F.),
- cough,
- sore throat,
- runny nose or stuffy nose, and
- may include muscle pain and fatigue, vomiting or diarrhea.

If your child is experiencing any symptoms, keep him or her at home until the child is better and has been well for two days. To reduce the spread of germs, avoid taking your children to public places while they are sick. It is important to teach your children how to reduce the risk of getting the flu and how to protect others from infection.

General tips for decreasing the spread of germs:

- Most important: **wash your hands often** with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If water is not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Follow label instructions when using hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (if a tissue is not available, the crook of the arm).
- Teach your children to keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose or eyes.
- Carefully dispose of the tissues in a wastebasket, and then wash your hands.
- Do not share drinking cups or food.

While the current situation does not warrant school closure, if a confirmed case of swine flu is reported in a school, we may close that school for several days. We will communicate with you immediately in the event of a school closure. If schools are closed, students should be kept home. Avoid visiting public places, visiting friends, group childcare, or anything that will put them in contact with other children. We recommend that you plan ahead in case of a school closing.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and our schools healthy.

For information about swine flu, visit the DPH's web site at <http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch/swineflu> , the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at www.cdc.gov/flu/swine , or the West Haven Health Department at <http://www.whhd.org/>.