

THE FLU (INFLUENZA) IS HERE!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I have started to see more students with flu-like symptoms in my clinic and will take this opportunity to inform you of what you can do to help control the spread of the Flu or other infections.

WHAT IS THE FLU?

It is a contagious viral infection in your respiratory system (nose, throat and possibly the lungs) that can be difficult to distinguish from other viral infections.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these signs and symptoms that usually start suddenly, not gradually:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (very tired)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in young children than in adults.

You can be sick without experiencing any of the symptoms or fever. You can also have the flu even if you were vaccinated. **Similarly, since there is crossover of symptoms between COVID and the flu,** it is impossible to tell the difference without a test.

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HOW DOES THE FLU SPREAD?

It spreads by tiny droplets sent out in the air when sick people cough, sneeze or talk. The droplets can land in the mouth or nose of people nearby. Less common, infection can also be passed on if people touch surfaces with virus on, and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth. A person can be contagious 1 day before becoming sick with symptoms and up till 5-7 days after falling sick.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT THE FLU?

- Get a flu vaccination
- Stay away from sick people
- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Disinfect contaminated surfaces
- Wash your hands OFTEN with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizer

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD GETS SICK?

CDC recommends the use of antiviral drugs for those patients who are at higher risk. High risk groups are the very young, elderly and people with chronic diseases, or if you are very ill from the flu. Contact your doctor as soon as possible to discuss this as the treatment should be started 1-2 days after the first symptoms.

In most cases the body will fight the infection. Keep your sick child at home until the child is without a fever for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication.

Keep your child well hydrated. Use of fever reducing medications can make your child feel a little more comfortable by comforting aches and pains and lowering the fever.

For further information you can read about the flu on www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm

COVID AND THE FLU

Flu vaccination DOES NOT protect for COVID & COVID vaccination DOES NOT protect for the flu. You may get vaccinated for both at the same time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please, feel free to call the health office any time. Telephone number 609 921 2330 ext 4122.

Sincerely,

Tine Boss, RN