

We are starting to see more occurrences of the flu in our schools. There are many things we can do while at school/work to help prevent the spread of germs, thus promoting good attendance by both students and staff. Teachers, please take a moment to review with your students some of the simple things we can do in helping prevent the spread of germs.

Flu and cold viruses spread three different ways: air droplets (sneezing and coughing), direct contact (example-shaking hands,) and indirect contact (germs spread through touching inanimate objects such as door knobs, handles and phones).

The following are ways to help prevent the spread of germs

- **“Cover Your Cough.”** Be respectful of others and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or **“Sneeze in Your Sleeve”**. Small particles are expelled from the nose at over 100 mph and cover a 3 foot radius.
- **Wash your hands with soap and water often.** Wash them after you cough or sneeze, after using the bathroom, before you eat and before you touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Use alcohol based gel sanitizers or wipes if soap and water are not available.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** These are the primary ways that cold and flu germs enter our body.
- **Inanimate objects:** Flu and cold viruses can live on inanimate objects several hours...even up to several days. **Clean areas that are frequently touched by the students or staff often:** door knobs, handles, classroom pencil sharpeners, desks and chairs, drinking fountains, bathrooms (toilet handles, faucets, edge of bathroom door stalls etc), phones, office surfaces, computer keyboard and mouse, pens (many of us put those up to our mouths without thinking) etc.
- We are usually able to go to work with a simple cold virus. Stay home when you are really sick (you know when this is) and check with your Health Care Provider as needed. This will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Practice other good health habits.** Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, eat healthy and drink lots of water.
- Avoid crowded places if possible. If someone is coughing/sneezing try to stay 6 feet from them.
- I encourage everyone to **get a flu shot** (Note:It may be too late in the year for this).

Hopefully, by being proactive we can minimize the absences due to colds and flu. If you have any questions, please contact your school nurse or the Health Services Department.

Thank you,  
Becky Little, RN