

**Answers to Frequently Asked Questions
For Parents about Schools and Child Care Programs and the H1N1 Flu
From the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) and the New Hampshire
Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS)**

We are providing answers to frequently asked questions for parents about school and childcare and the current H1N1 influenza (Swine Flu). A public inquiry line is also available 8:00 AM-8:00PM for questions at **1-888-330-6764**.

How will I know if schools and child care programs should/will be closed?

School and child care closure decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with state and local public health and education officials. In considering whether to recommend closure, public health officials will consider whether there is a confirmed or probable case; the severity of the virus; whether the patient was infectious when at the school or child care facility; and whether closure will decrease the spread of illness in the community. Frequent communication will take place with affected schools. School closures will be announced just as they are for weather-related closures.

How will we know when schools re-open?

Decisions to re-open schools will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with state and local public health and education officials. Schools will announce plans to re-open just as they make announcements for weather-related closures.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 influenza?

The symptoms of H1N1 are the same as for other types of flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.

When should I keep my child home from school or childcare?

If your child has flu-like symptoms, consult your health care provider. If your child has influenza you should keep them at home for 7 days or until 24 hours after symptoms are gone. A public inquiry line is also available 8:00 AM-8:00PM for questions at **1-888-330-6764**.

What are the H1N1 influenza infection prevention measures I can take to protect my children and family?

Many good materials can be found at the CDC website www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu. We have also attached a good prevention handout.

How worried should I be about the H1N1 virus?

To date, the cases of H1N1 influenza in the United States have been mild, with most patients recovering well and not experiencing symptoms any more severe than the regular flu.

Health and public officials are monitoring this strain of influenza so closely because it is a new virus and we need to be alert in case it becomes more severe.

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What should I do if schools and/or childcare programs are closed?

- If schools or child care programs close you may want to think about working together with two to three other families to supervise and provide care. Studies suggest that child care groups with fewer than five children typically have fewer respiratory infections.

What if my child goes to a residential school and they or other students are sick with influenza symptoms?

- Residential schools are being advised to voluntarily isolate students either at home, in the infirmary, or another setting separate from non-affected students.

These recommendations are subject to change as additional information about the H1N1 virus becomes available.