



## Montgomery County Public Health

PO Box 1500 County Annex Building Fonda, New York 12068

Telephone (518) 853-3531 Fax (518) 853-8218

**Kim D. Conboy RN, MS**

*Public Health Director*

November 5, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As you are aware, the H1N1 influenza A virus has been seen throughout New York State since the early spring. The H1N1 virus has not gone away, and we will continue to see a rise in cases. The majority of New Yorkers who have had H1N1 continue to experience mild to moderate symptoms similar to ordinary seasonal influenza and have recovered at home. It is important to note that exclusion of ill persons is only one part of efforts to control the spread of novel H1N1 influenza and should be done in conjunction with the promotion of good cough etiquette and hand hygiene.

Symptoms of influenza-like illness (ILI) and possible novel influenza A (H1N1) include fever (measured temperature of 100°F or more) **and either** cough or sore throat. In addition, illness may be accompanied by other symptoms including headache, tiredness, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, diarrhea, and vomiting. Most patients with clinical illness consistent with uncomplicated influenza who reside in an area where influenza viruses are circulating do not require diagnostic influenza testing for clinical management.

Respiratory illnesses are spread through the air when one coughs and sneezes. Therefore if a child becomes ill during the school day, the child will be separated from other children and provided a facemask to reduce the spread of infection. Parents should pick up their child if notified that their child is exhibiting the symptoms listed below. A person with ILI should be excluded from school, work, and related activities and should not go into the community, except to seek medical care, until they are symptom-free (no fever without fever control medications and feels well) for **at least 24 hours**.

As a reminder following these simple steps can help to drastically reduce the spread of illness:

- **Stay home when you are ill** and avoid contact with other people as much as possible.
- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or if a tissue is not available cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hand. Dispose of tissues in the trash after use.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough, sneeze or use a tissue. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**

Seasonal flu season is here and you can protect yourself and your children by being vaccinated. In the upcoming weeks, healthcare providers will begin to receive the H1N1 flu vaccine. In addition, H1N1 points of distribution will be setup throughout the county. If you are interested in having your child(ren) vaccinated against seasonal and/or H1N1, contact your healthcare provider or check your local newspaper for dates of flu clinics.

Respectfully Yours,

Kim D Conboy RN, MS