

Vernon Public Schools Health Room

Vernon, CT 06066

Parent Information Letter: Influenza

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The peak of the cold and flu season is upon us. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics the single best way to protect against influenza is to get vaccinated each year. There have been several cases of flu in your child's school. To prevent widespread flu in the school, we recommend that your child stay home from school if experiencing flu or cold symptoms. To decide whether or not to send your child to school, please consider the following guidelines:

Consider keeping your child at home for an extra day of rest and observation if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Very stuffy or runny nose and/or cough
- Mild sore throat (no fever, no known exposure to strep)
- Headache
- Mild stomach ache

Definitely keep your child at home for treatment and observation if he or she has any of these symptoms:

- Fever (greater than 100 degrees by mouth and your child may return to school only after his or her temperature has been consistently below 100 degrees, by mouth, for a minimum of 24 hours off of medication)
- Vomiting (even once)
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- General malaise or feelings of fatigue, discomfort, weakness or muscle aches
- Frequent congested (wet) or croupy cough
- Lots of nasal congestion with frequent blowing of nose

To help prevent the flu and other colds, teach your children good hygiene habits:

- Wash hands frequently
- Do not touch eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, use a paper tissue, throw it away and then wash hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Be sure to have enough sleep, lack of sleep reduces your body's resistance
- Drink lots of water, catching the flu is more likely if you are dehydrated
- Eat five (5) or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Good nutrition is an excellent way to keep your body resistant to the flu.
- Exercise, activities that increase your heart rate, such as walking, biking, and swimming, are excellent ways to keep your body resistant to disease.

Colds are the most contagious during the first 48 hours. A child who has a fever should remain at home until "fever free" for a minimum of 24 hours. A child who has started antibiotics needs to be on the medication for 24 hours before considered non-contagious and able to return to school. Often when a child awakens with vague complaints (the way colds and flu begin) it is wise to observe your child at home for an hour or two before deciding whether or not to bring to school. Your child should be physically able to participate in all school activities on return to school. Keeping a sick child at home will minimize the spread of infections and viruses in the classroom.

Thank you in advance for helping make this year at school as healthy as possible.

Vernon School Nurses

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/parent-flu-letter.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Communications/Pandemic-Influenza/Seasonal-Flu>

January 15, 2020

RHS 860-870-6050 x4035
NES 860-870-6082

VCMS 860-870-6077

CRS 860-870-6307

LSS 860-870-6088

MSS 860-870-6177
SRS 870-870-6185