



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

Dickinson County

818 Pyle Drive, Kingsford, MI 49802
Ph: (906) 774-1868 Fax: (906) 774-9910
BRANCH OFFICE

www.didhd.org

Iron County

601 Washington Avenue, Iron River, MI 49935
Ph: (906) 265-9913 Fax: (906) 265-2950
MAIN OFFICE

August, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We continue to see the spread of the H1N1 influenza virus (swine flu). A vaccine to prevent this flu is under production but not yet available. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified priority groups to receive vaccine when it is ready. Included in these priority groups are school-aged children, along with preschoolers and those in daycare. The Health Department expects to hold vaccination clinics in schools later this fall, as soon as the vaccine arrives. Participation in these clinics will be voluntary. You will receive more information about these clinics as they are scheduled.

In the meantime, you can help prevent the spread of influenza by doing the following:

- If your child is sick with flu-like symptoms, keep them home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever, or signs of fever, without the use of fever – reducing medications. Flu symptoms include:
 - A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
 - Sore throat
 - A prominent cough
 - A prominent headache
 - Body aches
 - Extreme tiredness or fatigue
 - Diarrhea and vomiting (in some cases)
- Do NOT give any aspirin or aspirin containing products to children/adolescents at any time. It is important to read the labels on cough and cold remedies, as some may contain aspirin.
- Cover noses and mouths with tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash after it has been used.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing, and before eating. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid contact with individuals who have flu symptoms

It is also important to protect yourself and your children from regular seasonal influenza. We strongly encourage **everyone** to be vaccinated against **seasonal influenza**. This vaccine provides protection against the usual flu that circulates in our community each winter but it **does not protect against H1N1**. Vaccine to protect your family from the seasonal influenza will be in abundant supply and will be available from your health care provider or from the Health Department in early fall. H1N1 vaccine will be available a bit later.

We will keep you informed as things change and as more information becomes available. You will play an important role in protecting the health of your family this fall.

Sincerely,

Linda Piper, RN, BSN, MPH

Health Officer