



1/18/2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Taney County Health Department (TCHD) has noted a significant increase in flu activity in the county including a large number of cases in school-aged children. The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Flu viruses are spread from person-to-person through the air by coughing or sneezing. A person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own nose or mouth. **Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue.** People with the flu may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after becoming sick. Children may pass the virus for longer than 7 days.

If your child develops flu-like symptoms, keep them home from school until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine. Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids. Talk to your doctor if you are worried about your child's illness. Antiviral drugs are prescription medications that can be used to treat flu in persons who are at high risk for flu complications.

In addition, take the following everyday preventative actions to stop the spread of flu:

- **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.** Throw the tissue away after use and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve, not your hand.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**
- **Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.

Remember the best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each flu season. Seasonal flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older unless they have a specific contraindication to flu vaccine.

For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm> or call the Taney County Health Department at (417) 334-4544.