



MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Fall, 2009

Dear Parents,

The McHenry County Department of Health and Centegra Health System are concerned about your child's health and the health of our community. We have partnered together to make the novel H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine available in your school as it becomes available. This voluntary vaccination is available and recommended for all children. A \$15.00 fee is requested to cover the costs associated with providing the vaccination at school and is payable to Centegra Health System. Vaccine will be available for anyone who does not have the ability to pay this fee. At this time, it is not yet clear when Centegra will receive the vaccine to conduct the clinics. There will be a subsequent notification from us regarding when the clinic at your school will be held, along with the necessary consent form to allow your child to receive the vaccination.

Novel H1N1 (swine flu) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus is spreading from person-to-person similarly to the regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. **Please note that the seasonal flu shot is not protective for novel H1N1 influenza.** So far, with novel H1N1 flu, the largest number of confirmed and probable cases has occurred in people younger than 25 years of age. Schools are working closely with the Health Department and Centegra Health System to keep your child healthy and in school.

We encourage you and your child to take the following actions to stay healthy and keep others healthy:

- ✓ **COVER** nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. **THROW** the tissue in the trash after use. If there is no tissue available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- ✓ **WASH** your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. (Alcohol based hand cleaners work if there is no soap and water available.)
- ✓ **AVOID** touching your eyes/nose/mouth. Germs spread that way!
- ✓ **STAY HOME** if you get sick. Right now, the CDC says to stay home for 24 hours *after* you are fever free for 24 hours *without* the use of fever reducing medications, such as Tylenol.
- ✓ **GET VACCINATED** this is the best protection against getting or spreading novel H1N1 influenza.

The school will notify you when the vaccination clinic is scheduled. A consent form must be completed for each child receiving the vaccine. When the consent form arrives, read and review the information, complete the form and provide your authorization by signing the consent. The most current information from the CDC is that children 9 and under will need two vaccinations. Children over 10 will only need one vaccination. For current information about the novel H1N1 influenza virus, visit www.MCDH.info. For questions about vaccine availability, call 1-815-334-2800.

We are offering you this voluntary opportunity to have your child vaccinated at school as a convenience to you and to make the vaccine available to as many children as possible. H1N1 vaccine will also be available at the following places:

- Most pediatric and family physicians
- Most retail pharmacies
- Community Clinics

Sincerely,

McHenry County Department of Health