

INFLUENZA (FLU)- a common viral respiratory infection. Influenza is not “stomach flu”, a term used by some to describe illness causing vomiting or diarrhea.

- **Symptoms:** Your child may have chills, body aches, fever and headache. In addition, a cough, runny or stuffy nose and sore throat may be present. The illness may last up to 7 days. If your child has been infected, it may take 1 to 4 days (usually 2 days) for symptoms to start.
- **Spread:** Influenza is spread by coughing, sneezing and touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces.
- **Contagious Period:** Your child is contagious during the 24 hours before and up to 7 days after the illness begins. Your child must stay at home until their temperature is below 100 degrees, without the use of fever reducing medication, for at least 24 hours, and the child is healthy enough for routine activities.
- **Call Your Healthcare Provider:** Contact your provider if anyone in your home has a high fever and/or coughs frequently. Your doctor may prescribe medications. Antibiotics do not work for illnesses caused by a virus, including influenza. **DO NOT** give aspirin or salicylate-containing medicines to anyone under 18 years of age.
- **Prevention:** Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing by using your sleeve or tissue and properly dispose of used tissue. Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing. **DO NOT** share anything that goes into the mouth, such as drinking cups, straws and water bottles. Use a product that kills viruses to clean and disinfect anything that comes in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. This includes door knobs, refrigerator handle, water faucets and cupboard handles. An annual influenza vaccination is recommended for children 6 months to 18 years of age. Ask your healthcare provider about this vaccine.

Source- Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases: A Guide for School Administrators, Nurses, Teachers, Child Care Providers, and Parents or Guardians; Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services-Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention)