

November 5, 2009

The New York State Department of Health has stated that the majority of influenza viruses recently sub-typed at the NYSDOH Wadsworth Center have been novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. So therefore, the flu virus that is currently circulating in our communities is most likely the H1N1 flu virus, as per the Rensselaer County Department of Health. Most people infected with the Novel H1N1 flu virus have experienced mild to moderate illness, similar to seasonal flu. Treatment for the novel H1N1 flu is the same as for the seasonal flu.

The flu can easily spread from person to person, but there are preventive measures you can take to help significantly reduce the incidence of the flu in our schools and community.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that you:

1. **Teach your children good hygiene.** Teach children to cover their coughs/sneezes with their elbows, use good hand washing habits, and keep their hands away from their face. Soap and water is the most effective way to avoid germs. Please stress the importance of not sharing personal items such as water bottles, drinks, food or utensils.
2. **Know the symptoms of the flu even if they are mild.** Symptoms include fever (100.8 degrees or higher), cough, sore throat, runny nose and body aches. Some children vomit or have diarrhea.
3. **Keep your children at home when they are sick.** Students who develop flu-like symptoms should stay home, rest, drink plenty of fluids, see their health care providers and remain home from school until they are free of fever for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication. Please follow the District's procedures for reporting absences by contacting your child's school.
4. **Consider the H1N1 flu vaccine, as well as the seasonal flu vaccine.** Please consult your pediatrician to determine if your child should receive either flu vaccine. Call your doctor or visit www.flucliniclocator.org for more information.

For more information about the flu check www.flu.gov.