

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

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March 28, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

There has recently been an increase in school absenteeism at Northstar Middle School. Parents have reported that students have been ill with influenza-like illness, including, fever, cough, vomiting, sore throat, tiredness and muscle aches.

In order to prevent additional cases of influenza in the school, if your child develops the symptoms described above, please keep your child home until fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

Some people are more likely to get flu complications such as pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus infection or ear infections. If you or your child are at risk of developing flu related complications, please talk to your health care provider about prophylactic antiviral medication to prevent influenza.

People at greatest risk for flu complications are:

- People with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, neurological conditions (cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, intellectual disability), chronic lung disease, endocrine disorders, heart disease, diabetes, weakened immune systems due to disease or medication (HIV or cancer), kidney disorders, liver disorders, metabolic disorders
- Children younger than 5 years
- Adults 65 years of age or older
- Pregnant women

In addition to staying home, other ways to prevent the spread of influenza include:

- Get vaccinated.
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing and sneezing. If you don't have tissue, cough and sneeze into your sleeve.
- Wash your hands for at least 10 seconds with soap and water.
- Wash your hands often, especially after coughing, sneezing or using the bathroom and before you touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- If you don't have access to water, use an alcohol-based gel or wipe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noël Hatley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Noël Hatley, MPH  
Disease Investigator