



City of Westfield, Massachusetts

Health Department

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Westfield Health Department

February 6, 2018

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

RE: Influenza (Flu)

Influenza activity this year is reaching wide spread epidemic proportions in Massachusetts and throughout the United States.

The flu is a very contagious respiratory disease and is easily transmitted from person to person by coughing and sneezing. Flu symptoms generally will last 7-10 days in most people.

The flu will usually start very **suddenly** with:

- Fever (from 102°-104°) lasting 3-4 days
- Headache and severe muscle aches
- General weakness/ extreme fatigue

Accompanying symptoms:

- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose

Recommendations for children with flu symptoms are to:

- Call your child's physician immediately.
- Stay home from school and avoid after school activities and sports for at least **7 days**.

Additional steps are:

- Enforce frequent handwashing or use of an alcohol based hand gel.
- Remind children to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing.
- Do not share items that can spread germs, like drinking cups, straws, or other items you put in your mouth.
- Clean frequently touched objects, at home such as door knobs, phones, water faucets.
- Avoid large crowds or gatherings

The best prevention is to obtain a yearly flu vaccination by calling your physician today.

Sincerely,

Debra Mulvenna, RN, BSN
Supervising Public Health Nurse
Westfield Health Department
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