



SAINT HENRY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

I am certain you are aware that the H1N1 flu virus is expected to resurface this fall and in fact sporadic cases are already appearing. We have been monitoring this situation since the summer months and will continue to do so.

We have started taking precautions: encouraging good hand washing; when hand washing is not possible to use hand sanitizer; disinfecting of staircase rails, door handles, computer keyboards and mice, table top surfaces and desks; and reinforcing good hygiene when coughing and sneezing. Please take time to reinforce and encourage these health practices at home. Prevention is the best defense!

We would appreciate your vigilance as parents to look for these signs and symptoms in your children:

- Combination **of fever and respiratory symptoms** (cough, runny nose, congestion, or sore throat)
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Occasionally vomiting and diarrhea

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is the primary agency monitoring and coordinating all H1N1 information and guidelines, and as such, we are at this time following their directives. If your child becomes ill with the above flu symptoms they should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not feel feverish, **without using fever-reducing drugs**. If the flu conditions become more severe, the ill individuals must remain home for 7 full calendar days or until symptoms, including fever, are completely gone for 24 hours- whichever is longer.

Siblings of the child with the flu may attend school, but should stay home as soon as they develop signs of illness or if flu conditions of sick sibling are more severe (in this case for the siblings they should stay home for 5 days to see if they develop symptoms). Exclusion of sick children from school is an important precaution for the entire community. Take time now to develop a plan for home supervision in case your children become ill with the flu. We are working on plans to assist children with continuity in instruction in the event of extended absences.

It is also important to know the following individuals are at higher risk: those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.

This letter along with helpful H1N1 information resources are posted on our website www.sthenryschool.org. It is important for us to have correct contact information to reach you during a time requiring immediate notification. We will be testing our School Reach emergency notification system to assess its accuracy in the next week or so. If you have not already done so, please return the School Reach contact information to the school office. After the testing, adjustments will be made and an additional test initiated.

Thank you for your attention to this important safety issue.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Ann Hyacinth, O.P.
Principal