



PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS IN THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

Foremost in our minds is the health and safety of our children, families and staff. Currently there are no special actions being recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, however, we do need to be quite vigilant with our typical routines. In order to do our best at disease prevention, we do the following:

- Wash staff and children's hands frequently. Staff is trained to wash their own and children's hands before and after many daily routine activities.
- Clean, sanitize and disinfect using appropriate chlorine bleach and water solutions. All staff is being extra vigilant in cleaning and sanitizing equipment and materials during this time.
- Monitor children for signs and symptoms of illness. We will continue to follow our illness policy as stated in the Family Handbook. Symptoms of an influenza-like illness include:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Runny or stuffy nose
 - Body aches and/or headache
 - Chills
 - Fatigue
 - Sometimes diarrhea or vomiting
- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue or upper sleeve when we cough or sneeze and instruct children to do the same.
- Stay home when we are ill. All staff has been advised to stay home and consult a health care professional if they develop any symptoms of influenza-like illness.
- Provide staff with seasonal flu vaccinations.

We need help from families in maintaining the healthiest possible environment for our children and staff. Families should do the following:

- Monitor their children for signs and symptoms of illness and keep children at home if they are ill. Follow the program's illness policy as stated in the Family Handbook and any "send home" instructions provided by program staff. The Family Handbook can be found at <http://hr.osu.edu/childcare/FamilyHandbook.pdf>
- If there is illness in the household, keep children at home so that the illness is not spread into the child care environment. If a child experiences an influenza-like illness, keep the child at home until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing

medications and until respiratory symptoms such as cough and runny nose are mild and manageable in a child care setting.

- Report the influenza-like illness to an administrator. Tracking this illness will help us determine if additional disease prevention strategies are necessary.
- Help children to wash hands upon arrival in the classroom. This helps prevent outside germs from being carried inside. Adult encouragement and support will help make hand-washing a comfortable routine. (Wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispensers can be found throughout both child care facilities. Hand sanitizer is intended for adult use only or for children when accompanied by a parent.)
- Teach children to cover nose and mouth with a tissue or upper sleeve when sneezing or coughing, throw the tissue in the trash can and wash hands thoroughly.
- Get vaccinated against the flu and seek early treatment for an influenza-like illness.
- Practice other good health habits. Build resistance by eating well, drinking plenty of fluids, staying active, getting enough sleep and managing stress.

For more information:

<http://flu.osu.edu/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

<http://www.aap.org/>

We are closely monitoring information from the University and the Centers for Disease Control. At this time, we will not report cases of influenza-like illness to the entire Child Care Program, but will continue to post exposure notification for individual classrooms.