



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Benton County Public Health  
309 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Vinton, IA 52349

August 25, 2009

Dear Parents,

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified school-aged children as one of the targeted populations for a recurrence of the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A virus this fall. Benton County Public Health is fully engaged with its local and state preparedness partners in an effort to limit the spread of the virus. One way to ease the spread of H1N1 and seasonal flu is by practicing good personal hygiene.

It is important that your school aged children as well as others in your household consider the opportunities you have to stop the spread of germs.

- Influenza spreads easily. **If you suspect your child is getting influenza, keep them home!**
- It is important that your sick child does not attend school or go anywhere else – such as group childcare, the mall, or sporting events – where other people could be exposed to influenza germs. Be sure they are **free of fever without fever reducing medication** before they return to school.
- Symptoms of Influenza are:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Sore throat
  - Body Aches
  - Chills
  - Fatigue
- Like seasonal influenza, novel H1N1 influenza A may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.
- To reduce their risk of getting influenza, **teach your children to wash their hands often.** Washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (sing “The ABC song” twice)
- **Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes** with tissues or coughing into the inside of their elbow. **Cough or sneeze into your sleeve – not your hands!** Use an alcohol based hand gel with 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

Sincerely,

Chairperson,  
Benton County Board of Health