



Influenza-Like Illness Case Definition and Infection Control

Definition and Procedure

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines an Influenza-Like Illness as an individual with the following symptoms:

- Fever 100° degrees Fahrenheit or higher, AND
- Cough, AND/OR
- Sore throat

In the absence of a physician's diagnosis of laboratory test results, individuals that meet the above criteria should be managed as cases of influenza.

A student with flu-like symptoms must be sent to the school nurse for screening (symptom check and/or temperature check). If the student meets the case definition as described above, he/she should remain in the nurse's office (or another designated area) until a parent or guardian takes the child home; the student should not be allowed back into his/her classroom. The student must be excluded from school until symptom-free.

Recommendations for Infection Control in Schools and Workplaces

- In schools and workplaces, infection control for pandemic influenza should focus on:
 - Keeping sick students, faculty, and workers away while they are infectious.
 - Promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and hand hygiene as for any respiratory infection. The benefit of wearing masks in these settings has not been established.
- School administrators and employers should ensure that materials for respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette (i.e., tissues and receptacles for their disposal) and hand hygiene are available. Educational messages and infection control guidance for pandemic influenza are available for distribution. (CDC will develop educational materials appropriate to various audiences.)

Infection control in the community should focus on "social distancing" and promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and hand hygiene to decrease exposure to others.

INFLUENZA

(flu) Incubation, Signs and Symptoms

Incubation Period: Usually 1-5 days.

Signs and Symptoms: Sudden onset of an acute viral disease with symptoms of fever, chills, headache, sore muscles, and a general feeling of being unwell, associated with runny nose, sore throat, and cough. Cough is often severe and lasts longer than other symptoms which generally subside in 2-7 days. Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may occur in children.

Methods of Transmission

Direct contact with respiratory secretions or droplets from an infected person, or indirect contact with articles freshly soiled by discharges from an infected person, the virus is excreted in discharges from the nose and throat and can live in dried mucus for 2-8 hours.

Minimum Control Measures

Communicable Period: Probably 3-5 days after onset of symptoms; can be up to 7 days after the onset of symptoms in younger children.

Control: **EXCLUDE child who has fever or feels unwell (See Definition and Procedure above).**

Influenza is generally more severe in very young children who have had no prior exposure; influenza resembles a cold or other respiratory virus.

Because young, otherwise healthy children are at increased risk for influenza-related hospitalizations, it is encouraged that healthy children aged 6-59 months receive influenza vaccination when feasible. It is also strongly recommended that children aged six months and greater with certain medical conditions receive influenza vaccination. Annual immunizations are effective in preventing infections. Physicians may prescribe antiviral medications for exposed individuals to reduce influenza transmission. Individuals exposed to influenza should consult with their physicians.

Other Information

Children must not be given aspirin or salicylate-containing compounds because administration of the products increases the risks of subsequent Reye syndrome.

Acetaminophen may be used for fever control. Reye's syndrome is a rare but life-threatening illness. Early signs and symptoms are vomiting and confusion. Medical care should be sought immediately if Reye syndrome is suspected.