



# Influenza Outbreak in Schools & Childcare

## Resource Guide

### Influenza Quick Reference

<b>Influenza Symptoms</b>	Common symptoms include: fever, fatigue, headache, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, chills, and muscle aches.
<b>Incubation Period</b>	1 – 4 days (average 2 days)
<b>Period of Communicability</b>	1 day before and up to 10 days after symptom onset
<b>Mode of Transmission</b>	Spreads via contact with respiratory droplets either directly through the air or indirectly via contact with contaminated surfaces.
<b>Influenza Treatment</b>	Typical treatment of influenza consists primarily of supportive care such as rest, ensuring adequate fluid intake, and using over the counter medications as directed. Some individuals may benefit from antiviral treatments.
<b>When to Report to CCHHS</b>	When absenteeism linked to respiratory illness is $\geq$ 10% in a specific school and/or classroom OR when two or more students in the same classroom have confirmed influenza.
<b>How to Report to CCHHS</b>	Upload a line list securely <a href="#">online</a> OR fax a line list to our secure fax line at (360) 425-7531.
<b>What to Report to CCHHS</b>	A line list of positive and symptomatic students and staff.

### What are the Reporting Requirements?

- Schools are recommended to report the following:
  - When absenteeism linked to respiratory illness is  $\geq$  10% in a specific school and/or classroom.
  - When two or more students in the same classroom have confirmed influenza.

### How do I report an outbreak to Cowlitz County Health & Human Services?

- To report a suspected or confirmed outbreak, facilities can upload a line list securely [online](#) OR fax a line list to our secure fax line at (360) 425-7531. If schools have questions or aren't sure if they are having an outbreak, CCHHS can be reached via phone at (360) 414-5599 extension 6431.

### What is Influenza-Like Illness and why should it be reported?

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) is defined as fever  $\geq$ 100°F and a cough or sore throat.
- ILI should be reported as many times children do not receive influenza testing for confirmation and implementing control measures based on symptoms can help reduce the spread of illness within schools.

# Infection Prevention Control Measures

## Before Influenza Season

- Educate staff, students, families, and volunteers on the symptoms of influenza or ILI.
- Promote proper hand hygiene techniques and consider posting signs on proper handwashing.
- Remind staff, students, and volunteers of the importance of covering coughs and sneezes and staying home when ill.
- Implement policies that encourage staff with ILI to stay home.

## Throughout Influenza Season

- Continue educating staff, students, families, and volunteers on the importance of hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home when ill.
- Perform enhanced cleaning of all high touch surfaces.
- Ensure tracking of reported illness at school and associated symptoms. Monitor absenteeism rates within the school.

## During an Outbreak

- Notify CCHHS of a confirmed or suspected influenza outbreak and conduct daily surveillance with line listing until the outbreak is declared over.
- Exclude staff and students with influenza or ILI until symptoms have improved and they have been fever free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.
- If ILI is widespread or a student with confirmed influenza attended while potentially contagious, consider distribution of a notification letter to those who were potentially exposed (E.g. classroom or entire school). CCHHS has a letter template available for schools to use.
- Reinforce the importance of cough etiquette and hand hygiene throughout the outbreak.
- Ensure hand washing stations are available and have adequate supplies of soap, paper towels, and access to a hands free trash bin.
- If you have a facility licenser (childcare), notify them of your current outbreak status.
- An outbreak is typically over 7 days after the last onset of influenza or ILI.

## After an Outbreak

- Evaluate your facility's response.
- Develop action plans to address any identified areas of concern regarding facility readiness and response.

## Additional Resources

- CDC:
  - [Guidance for School Administrators to Help Reduce the Spread of Seasonal Influenza in K-12 Schools](#)
  - [How To Clean and Disinfect Schools To Help Slow the Spread of Flu](#)
  - [Cover Your Cough Poster](#)