

**Dawson County Health Services
Flu Season Update
2017-2018 School Year**

Attention Dawson County Residents, the Flu Season Is Here...

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), flu viruses tend to peak between December and March, and this is called the “Flu Season.” The timing of flu is not always predictable and can vary in different parts of the country and from season to season. Although most people will recover from the flu, it can cause serious illness and possibly even death in those that are at high risk. High risk populations include; older adults, very young children, pregnant women, and those with certain chronic medical conditions.

The CDC and public health officials recommend everyone – 6 months of age and older get the flu vaccine yearly. Therefore, it is very important for us to remind parents, students and faculty/staff to get vaccinated.

The flu is spread mainly from person to person through coughing, sneezing and touching surfaces with the flu virus on it. Typical symptoms of the flu include high fever, cough, sore throat, running or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches, and fatigue.

Some preventive measures you can do to help reduce the spread of flu and other infectious illnesses include:

- **WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY with soap and water.** If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer/rub.
- Teach children not to share personal items like drinks, food, eating utensils.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and properly dispose of used tissues. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow, arm or sleeve when coughing or sneezing instead of the hand (avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth – germs spread this way).
- Wash athletic practice clothing each day, and shower after any contact sport.
- Stay home if you are sick, especially during the first days of illness when symptoms are more severe and the infection is most contagious. Return to work or school only after symptoms have improved and after you have been without fever for 24 hours.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu. Viruses lurk in places you wouldn't think. Everyone is vulnerable to picking up viruses.
- Eat healthy food (fruits and vegetables) and drink plenty of fluids.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date.
- Take flu antiviral medications if your doctor prescribes them.

Again, get vaccinated against the flu and wash your hands frequently!

By working together, we can help reduce the transmission of the flu and other infectious illnesses in the schools and community. For more information, please contact the Office of Student Health Services at 706-265-6544 or your health care provider.

Vikk Brannon BSN, RN, NCSN
Director of Health Services for Dawson County Schools