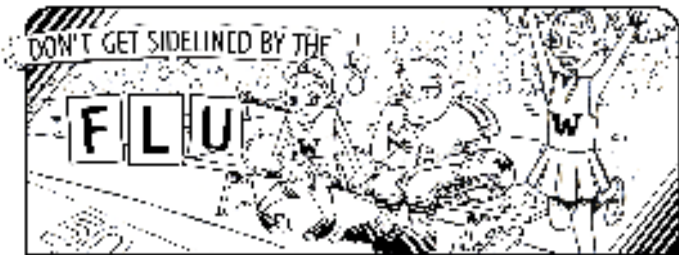


# FLU OUTBREAK ADVISORY

With reported flu outbreaks in the Columbia and Northumberland Counties and the surrounding areas, it is important that we work together and take precautions to keep our school and children healthy. Viruses spread easily among children in schools, and families with school-age children have more infections than others, with an average of one-third of these family members infected each year. By keeping our children flu-free we benefit the community as a whole. Additionally, healthy students miss fewer days of school, which results in less stress on the family. Following are



- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccination is the first line of defense in preventing the flu
  - Students and parents – especially those with chronic medical conditions – should get a flu shot. It is never too late in the season to get your child vaccinated. You should also get a flu shot to avoid spreading the flu to your child
- If your child has the flu, he or she should stay home from school
- Students who may have the flu should not participate in sports, choir or any activities that involve close contact
- You should talk with your child about practicing good health habits, including:
  - Washing hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
  - Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and discarding the tissue in a trash can
- You can help keep your child healthy by disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, toys and other commonly shared items
  - If you are concerned about your child's flu symptoms, call your doctor early. Call your doctor immediately if

your child has a chronic disease. Some children might benefit from an antiviral medication, which can be prescribed by a physician and can help lessen the duration of the virus and reduce the risk of complications

- To be effective, antiviral medication should be taken within 12-48 hours after flu symptoms begin
- If someone in your family gets the flu, a doctor can prescribe antiviral medications for other members of the family to prevent them from getting sick
  - Studies show that some antiviral medication is up to 89 percent effective in preventing the flu when taken once daily for seven days
- In addition, if your child has the flu, he/she should stay home from school, rest and drink plenty of liquids
- Notify the school nurses if your child has the flu

**Grades K-6<sup>th</sup>** contact Mrs. Atherton and Mrs. McGinley at (570) 356-3253.

**Grades 7-12<sup>th</sup>** contact Mrs. Kimberly Delbo, RN at (570) 356-3462 or via email at [kdelbo@scasd.us](mailto:kdelbo@scasd.us)

- Monitoring flu incidence at Southern Columbia Area School District will help keep students, faculty and our community healthy.
- The school nurses can provide you with additional information about flu incidence in the Columbia and Northumberland County areas.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE INFLUENZA VIRUS, VISIT [WWW.CDC.GOV/FLU](http://WWW.CDC.GOV/FLU)

