



2096 Red Arrow Trail
Madison, WI 53711
608-275-6740

Influenza

Communicable Disease Exposure Notice

Dear Parents:

Your child may have been exposed to the communicable disease **Influenza** in a Reach Dane/Reach Green classroom on the following date_____.

Please review the information below. If you have any questions, or if your child begins experiencing symptoms of the illness, contact your child's primary care provider or one of the agencies listed below.

Public Health – Madison & Dane County

(608) 266-4821

Green County Health Department

(608) 328-9390

What is influenza?

Influenza or "flu" is a respiratory disease caused by two main types of influenza virus, type A and type B.

What are the symptoms of influenza?

Influenza illness ranges from very mild to severe, depending on such factors as the influenza strain involved, and the person's susceptibility and general physical condition. Symptoms include fever, chills, headache, dry cough, and aching in the muscles and joints and some people may have vomiting and diarrhea.

Most people recover within a week after they become ill, although they may continue to feel tired for several days. Influenza can last longer and cause life-threatening complications in infants, elderly persons, and persons with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, heart, lung, or kidney disease, severe anemia, or chronic diseases that weaken the immune system.

How does a person get influenza?

Influenza is spread from person to person when droplets of respiratory secretions from an infected person are spread through the air when that person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets contain viruses that when inhaled by another person can cause an infection.

How long does it take to develop influenza following exposure?

Symptoms occur 1 to 3 days after exposure to respiratory droplets from an infected person.

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How long is an infected person able to spread influenza?

An infected person can spread influenza virus in discharges from their nose and throat from 24 hours before the onset of their illness to 3-5 days after onset of illness. Young children and persons with a weakened immune system can spread the virus for 7 days or longer

How is influenza treated?

Treatment is supportive, including bed rest, drinking increased amounts of liquids, and taking pain relievers to help reduce the discomfort of illness and fever is recommended. Children with influenza should not be treated with aspirin due to the risk of developing Reye's syndrome. Certain anti-viral drugs available with a physician's prescription may reduce the severity of disease caused by influenza if therapy is started early in the course of the illness (within 48 hours of the beginning of symptoms). Your health care provider can advise you on treatment options.

How long is a child with influenza excluded from childcare?

Children are excluded until 24 hours fever free.

How Can I Limit the Spread of influenza?

All children and adults should practice good hand washing technique. Persons with influenza symptoms should seek prompt medical care.

How can influenza be prevented?

The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year. While infection usually causes the infected person to become immune to further disease, the flu virus has the ability to change over time. Therefore it is necessary to get the flu vaccination each year.