

Mark Harris, County Executive
Doug Gieryn, Health Officer/Director

Office Hours: M-F 8:00am-4:00pm
Toll-Free: 800-250-3110
Fax: 920-232-3370

health@co.winnebago.wi.us
www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health
www.rethinkwinnebago.org



PublicHealth
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Winnebago County
Health Department

□ 112 Otter Avenue
PO Box 2808
Oshkosh, WI 54903-2808
Phone: 920-232-3000

□ 211 Walnut Street
Neenah, WI 54956
Phone: 920-727-2894

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Dear Parents,

It's that time of year when we tend to see more student absences due to illness and we are seeing an increase of students absent due to fever, cough, and cold/influenza-like illnesses. If your child experiences any of these symptoms, please keep them home during their illness and for 24 hours following their illness. This will help to keep the illness from spreading to other children and staff.

Here are some helpful suggestions to help decrease the spread of illness at home and school:

- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds in addition to every time after they use the restroom. Monitor young children when they wash their hands for good handwashing technique.
- Be sure to set a good example by practicing good hand washing and coughing practices yourself.
- Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs on them in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Monitor young children when using hand sanitizers as many can smell good enough to taste.
- Teach your children to cough and sneeze into the inside of their elbow.
- Teach your children not to share drinks with others and to try to keep an arm spans distance away from people who are sick.
- We recommend your children receive a seasonal influenza vaccine and make sure they are up to date on all other immunizations.
- Influenza can be treated with Antiviral medication within the first 48 hours of symptoms - call your doctor's office if you suspect flu.
- Children who are ill should stay home from school, recreational/social events, and daycare for 24 hours after symptoms subside.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects. Clean and disinfect "frequently touched" surfaces at home such as door knobs and counter-tops: especially when someone is ill.

Thank you for your attention.

Wishing you a healthy winter season!

Winnebago County Health Department
Communicable Disease Division
(920) 232-3000