



Tips for Staying Healthy During Flu and Cold Season

Flu season has struck, and youth can be more affected than usual. Seattle Public Schools is taking a proactive approach to fighting colds and flu in our schools by sharing information to help you stay healthy.

The flu is transmitted by close personal contact. You can take the following steps to stay healthy during this flu season. Please use these tips to cut down your child's risk of getting sick and catching the flu:

- Encourage regular hand-washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available and your hands are not visibly soiled.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands.
- Stay home when you are sick. Do not return to work or school until you are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours without the aid of medication.
- Drink plenty of water and get plenty of rest.
- Get your flu shot. Even if the season's flu shot is not directed at the current strain of the flu, receiving a shot can help shorten and reduce flu symptoms.

The flu has many symptoms, some of which may not be present. Here are the common symptoms:

- fever*
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- fatigue
- sometimes diarrhea and vomiting

*It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.

If your child comes down with the flu, watch carefully for signs of complications. Seek medical attention if your child has difficulty breathing, appears limp or extremely weak, is confused or does not respond, has a fever over 104 or a fever that lasts more than 48 hours, or a very dry mouth with no urine output for 8 hours. Call your child's health care provider if you have any questions. Remember, children must

be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

If you have questions about whether or not your child should attend school due to illness, please contact your child's school. Also, your school's nurse is a valuable resource to discuss how to avoid the flu, recognizing symptoms, and how to speed recovery. Please also see "When to keep your child home" on our [Health Services](#) website.

You can learn more about how to prevent the spread of the flu by visiting the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm