

H1N1 Information for Child Care Providers

Prepare Now for H1N1 Flu

- Update contact information for parents so they can be easily reached to pick up a sick child
- Review child records to identify children with underlying health conditions that would put them at risk from flu complications
- Set up a separate space for care of sick children/staff which will separate them from others by at least 6 feet until they can be sent home
- Develop a back-up plan to cover key positions when staff are sick or caring for sick family members
- It is not possible to completely prevent the spread of infectious disease like flu in early childhood program settings. No policy can keep everyone who is infectious out of these settings. Parents should watch their children carefully for signs and symptoms of flu and keep them home if they become sick.
- For more information contact the Health Department information line at 258-4636 or the Child Care Health Consultant.



Prevent the Spread of H1N1

Policies:

- **Daily Health Check :** required by the Montana Child Care Licensing Rules, this is a sensory observation of the child and a verbal check-in with the parent when the child enters the program for the day
- **Sick Child Exclusion Policy:** follow MT Child Care Licensing Rules for exclusion of children with fever and specific symptoms AND program policies in place that may be more specific than licensing rules. (**IMPORTANT:** A note from a doctor's office or Health Care Provider should **NOT** be required for re-admission.)
- **For influenza or influenza-like-illness (ILI), children and staff should not be at daycare if they have a fever of 100° F or greater without the use of fever medication.**
- Notify all parents when an enrolled child is diagnosed with ILI and symptoms to watch for. **DO NOT** identify the child by name.
- ***Children and staff cannot return to daycare until 24 hours without fever without the aid of anti-fever medications.***

Missoula City-County Health Department
Information line: 258-4636
<http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/health/>

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Staff:

- Encourage all staff to get vaccinated for seasonal flu. All caregivers who care for children younger than 6 months old should be vaccinated for H1N1 when available. Call 258-4636.
- Send sick staff home immediately and remind staff to stay home when they have flu-like symptoms

Cleaning Practices:

- Cleaning and Sanitizing of Surfaces – routine daily cleaning of food service areas, toileting areas and items children frequently touch with their hands or mouths, such as toys, chairs, or playground equipment.

Teaching Opportunity:

- Teach (and remind daily) all enrolled children to practice good hand washing and covering their mouths and nose (called respiratory etiquette) when coughing or sneezing.



Families Can Help Prevent Their Child from Getting H1N1 Flu

Vaccination:

- Get children from 6 months-4 years of age vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines become available.
- Parents and others who live with and care for children younger than 6 months should also be vaccinated.
- Pregnant women (both mothers and child care staff) should be vaccinated.
- Family members (or child care staff) of any age with chronic health conditions should be vaccinated.

Illness:

- Keep children home when they are sick. Take responsibility for helping to prevent the spread of the flu.

Teaching:

- Teach children and help them practice at home both good hand washing and covering their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze.

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Symptoms of H1N1:

- Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or above)
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or Stuffy Nose
- Body aches and/or Headache
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Sometimes, vomiting and diarrhea



Treatment for H1N1 Flu (*not a Replacement for Vaccination*)

- Anti-viral drugs are Tamiflu and Relenza (Relenza should not be used in children younger than 5).
- Parents of children with ILI younger than 4 years old should consult with their healthcare provider by phone. Children younger than 2 are at higher risk of serious complications.
- Anti-viral drugs can make illness milder, make a person feel better faster, and prevent serious flu complications.
- **Are most effective when given within the first 2 days after symptoms begin.**
- **May be prescribed by a health care provider as preventative** if another person in the household or a close contact has the flu (usually only to children at increased risk for complications of the flu, such as children under age 2 or children with chronic medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, metabolic conditions, neurologic and neuromuscular disorders).
- Unlike antibiotics, taking anti-virals does NOT allow returning to daycare before the symptoms and the fever are gone.

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