

Flu Illness Important Notice to Parents

A number of children who attend Queen Palmer Elementary have been experiencing an influenza-like illness with symptoms of fever, headache and/or muscle aches, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose and general fatigue. It is likely that seasonal flu (influenza) is the cause of these symptoms. People who live in the same home or share a common space like a classroom are much more likely to get flu-like illness from each other. A flu shot and good hand washing is the best way to prevent the flu. If your child has not gotten a flu shot, it's not too late to get it. **Exclude children with flu-like symptoms from childcare/school until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of medication.**

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Fever (typically sudden onset)
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Nausea and vomiting may occur

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

- Flu virus is spread from a sick person in droplets released by coughing or sneezing.
- Flu virus is spread through contact with contaminated surfaces, hands, used tissues, or other articles soiled by nose and throat secretions.
- It can take 1-4 days (usually two days) after exposure for a person to get sick.

HOW LONG CAN A PERSON PASS THE INFECTION TO OTHERS?

- Flu is contagious 24 hours before and 5 to 7 days after the symptoms start.
- Children may be contagious for longer than seven days.

TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF SPREAD

- If your child has flu symptoms, you should inform your physician of possible exposure to flu.
- The usual treatment for flu is rest at home, plenty of fluids, and non-aspirin pain relievers.
- It is not usually treated with antiviral medications unless the sick person has a higher risk for serious complications, ask your healthcare provider for more information.
- A flu shot is the best way to prevent flu illness.
- **Exclude children with flu-like symptoms from childcare/school until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever without the use of medication.**

If you have any questions regarding an ill child, please contact your medical provider. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations please contact **El Paso County Public Health, 719-578-3220**, Monday through Friday, between 7:30 am and 4:30 pm.