



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health
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Currently influenza is widespread in Virginia, including our region. Local schools may want to consider the following actions to decrease the spread of this and other communicable respiratory illnesses.

Respiratory Etiquette for Staff, Students and Visitors

Use tissues to cover the mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of the tissue immediately in a trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. Remember to wash your hands after coughing or sneezing. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Rinse and dry hands with a disposable towel, and use the towel to turn off the faucet. When hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol may be used.

Public Health Recommendations

- Encourage students, parents, and staff to get a yearly flu vaccine.
- Educate and encourage respiratory etiquette among staff, visitors and students.
- Assure restrooms are kept fully stocked with soap and disposable towels.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers in classrooms, libraries, and other common areas.
- Keep shared objects and surfaces clean. Bleach solution or a general household cleaner can be used to clean washable surfaces and objects contaminated by nasal discharges, coughing and sneezing.
- Encourage staff and children to avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Assure students wash their hands before eating.
- Educate students to not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Exclude children with fever from the classroom.
- Recommend parents keep children with respiratory symptoms and fever out of school until they have, at a minimum, been fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medicines) for a full 24 hours.

Further influenza information is available online from the Virginia Department of Health (<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/influenza-flu-in-virginia/>) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/flu).