

**To: All Parents**  
**From: Nicki Kammel, Child Care Director**  
**Date: 10/19/09**

I hope this memo finds everyone in good health. There are two children in our center that have confirmed cases of H1N1. With that, I wanted to remind and inform parents about some of our policies regarding sick children.

We have been and will continue to be very strict about these policies. Please understand, when we send a child home, it is to protect the staff and families of Coulee Children's Center. It is as important as ever to make sure we do everything we can to prevent the spread of H1N1 and all other illness.

Please carefully read the following:

- ☒ All children with a temperature of 100.5 degrees or over will be sent home.
- ☒ Children must remain home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer.
- ☒ If a child is so sick they are not able to participate in the normal activities of the day, they will be sent home.
- ☒ If a child is sent home due to vomiting or diarrhea, they must remain home the next day as well and longer if they are still showing signs or symptoms of the illness.

If you have a sick child, please keep your other children home as well. With H1N1, people are contagious 24 hours BEFORE they show symptoms, so keeping other children home will help lessen the exposure of the other children in our program.

You will be asked in the next couple of days by your child's teacher to update any contact information on your child's Emergency Cards. Please make sure all contact information is accurate.

I also wanted to inform you of the steps we are taking to help prevent the spread of illnesses, in addition to sending sick children home. Employees have been told to stay home if they are sick. We talked in detail at a staff meeting about proper hand washing and teachers are being especially vigilant about washing their own hands and teaching proper hand washing to children that are old enough. Teachers of children not yet able to wash their own hands are making sure they are washing the children's hand thoroughly. Teachers are also sanitizing their rooms and the toys in their room more often. Please be assured that we are doing everything we can on our end to prevent illnesses from spreading.

Attached is information from the Centers for Disease Control specific to families in child care regarding the flu. If you have any questions about this memo, please contact me at 787-5572 or couleechildrensmain@hotmail.com.

## **If your child is not feeling well ...**

- Ⓢ **Watch carefully for signs and symptoms of flu.** Some children may not be able to tell you about their symptoms, which can delay your response to their illness. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.

A fever is a temperature measured by mouth with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius). If you are not able to measure a temperature, signs and symptoms that may indicate your child has a fever include chills, feeling very warm to the touch, having a flushed appearance, or sweating.

- Ⓢ **Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention.** These warning signs include one or more of the following:
  - Ⓢ fast breathing, trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or no longer breathing;
- Ⓢ bluish, purplish, or gray skin color especially around the lips and the inside of the mouth, or around the nails;
- Ⓢ not drinking enough fluids, refusing to drink;
- Ⓢ not urinating, decreased number of wet diapers, or no tears when crying;
- Ⓢ severe or persistent vomiting;
- Ⓢ not waking up or not interacting (e.g., unusually quiet and inactive, no interest in playing, no interest in favorite toy);
- Ⓢ being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, or cannot be consoled;
- Ⓢ pain or pressure in the chest or stomach;
- Ⓢ sudden dizziness;
- Ⓢ confusion; and
- Ⓢ flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.
- Ⓢ **Stay home if you or your child is sick with the flu** until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Children and teenagers *should not* be given aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid); this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
- Ⓢ **Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids** (such as water, broth, sports drinks) to prevent dehydration. For infants, use electrolyte beverages such as Pedialyte®.
- Ⓢ **Contact your doctor immediately if a child younger than 5 years of age is sick.** This is important because the antiviral medicines used to treat flu work best when started within the first 2 days of getting sick. Your doctor will tell you what special care is needed for your child.

## **To protect other family members ...**

- Ⓢ **Make sure your child's hands are washed often, and especially after coughing or sneezing.** Help your younger child wash them for 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Ⓢ Have your child **cough and sneeze into a tissue** or into his or her elbow or shoulder if a tissue is not available. Make sure your child throws tissues away right after use.
- Ⓢ **Clean surfaces and objects that your child frequently touches** with his or her hands, mouth, or body fluids. Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant that is usually used, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
- Ⓢ **Keep your sick child in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for the sick child.
- Ⓢ **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu according to CDC recommendations when vaccines become available.

For more information about flu, call 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).