



# Busy Flu Season Expected

## *Wash hands; stay home when sick*

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As we have all heard, health officials are predicting another wave of the H1N1 flu virus. To reduce the spread of this flu, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) has put into place the following procedures.

### **Reporting Student Absences**

Parents should report their child's absences to the school and provide the reason why the student will be away. Students who become ill should stay home until they no longer have a fever, and are feeling better, or are not presenting severe influenza type symptoms.

### **When Flu-like Symptoms Appear During School Hours**

When a student exhibits flu-like symptoms during the school day, the following steps will be followed, as recommended by Federal health guidelines:

1. Students presenting symptoms will be located in an area away from other students.
2. Parents and caregivers will be called to transport the students home until they feel better.
3. Students are to remain at home until symptoms subside.

### **Good Hygiene and Hand Washing Practices**

- Wash hands well and often—with soap and warm water.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or arm.
- Contact your family doctor and stay at home if you are ill.
- Keep doing what you normally do, but stay home if sick.
- Talk to a health professional if you experience severe flu-like symptoms.



### **Tracking Student Absences**

Schools will be keeping an active record of daily, weekly and monthly attendance by school and homeroom.

School administration will track the percentage of the school population absent and areas or grades in the school that may be of concern.

Schools will report to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and the SCDSB Pandemic Management Team when school absences are 10% or more of the total school population.

The school will continue to communicate with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and the SCDSB Pandemic Management Team in the days following to indicate whether rates are increasing, decreasing or remaining the same.

### **Safe Arrival Questions You'll be Asked**

The school will document the reasons for each student absence. When Safe Arrival volunteers call your home, you will be asked the following questions:

- Why is your child absent from school?
- If he/she is not feeling well, what are the symptoms?
- Do you expect her/him to return to school tomorrow?

Please be sure to call in to the school to report your child's absence and the reasons for the absence every day your child is away.

### **Symptoms of H1N1 and Other Influenza-like Illness**

Symptoms of H1N1 flu virus are similar to seasonal influenza (flu) including: fever, extreme tiredness, muscle aches, lack of appetite, coughing, runny nose, shortness of breath and sore throat. Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may occur in adults as well as in children.

In more severe cases, or in people with chronic conditions, complications such as pneumonia may develop.

For more information about symptoms, visit [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca) or call "Your Health Connection" at 721-7520 or 1 877-721-7520 or TeleHealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

### **General Information About H1N1**

For more information, please consult the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit website at [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org). For general information, call "Your Health Connection" at (705) 721-7520 or toll free at 1-877-721-7520 Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.