

BELLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
PO BOX 7
JOE MOORE, SUPERINTENDENT
BELLS TX 75414
(903) 965-7725

10-06-09

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I wanted to make parents aware that we have had a few cases of Type A Flu in our district. In an effort to help keep our students healthy, we want to share with you important awareness and prevention information. This includes what you can do to keep your child healthy and what we are doing as a district to promote the overall health and wellness of our students and staff.

What You Can Do to Keep Your Children Healthy

- *Encourage your child to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are also effective.
 - *Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after it is used. Encourage them to cough or sneeze into their elbow and not their hands if tissues are not available.
 - *Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
 - *Keep your child home if they are sick. The Centers for Disease Control recommends that children stay home from school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
 - *Students with flu-like illness (**fever 100 degrees or greater, cough, sore throat, headache, body aches, chills, or fatigue**) must stay home from school for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, without the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc. Children under the age of 19 should not take Aspirin.
- There is a link between Aspirin and Reyes Syndrome.
- *Ask your doctor about getting a Flu Vaccine.

What We Are Doing at School to Promote the Health and Wellness of Our Students and Staff

- *We will remain in close contact with our local health authority and provide you with information when necessary. Information will be available on our website at www.bellsisd.net.
- *We will continue to emphasize to students the importance of good hand hygiene and respiratory care, including keeping hands away from the face.
- *Encourage hand washing at school.
- *Provide alcohol based hand sanitizer for our older students since younger students put their hands in their mouths. Rub on hands for at least 20 seconds or until gel has dissolved.
- *We will routinely disinfect/clean all areas of the schools.

Flu is spread from person to person by the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with the flu. People may also get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. You may be contagious 1 day before getting sick and up to 7 days after. There are antiviral medications available to shorten the flu but must be started within the first 2 days. **SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:** your child has fast or trouble breathing, bluish or gray skin color, not drinking enough fluids, severe or persistent vomiting, not waking up or interacting, being so irritable the child does not want to be held, flu like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough, has other conditions like heart or lung disease, diabetes or asthma and develops flu like symptoms, including a fever and or cough. For more information contact your doctors office or visit www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov on your computer.

Sincerely,

Deborah Bennett Williams, LVN
Joe Moore, Superintendent

Seasonal Influenza (FLU)

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness. It can cause mild, to severe illness and can lead to death. Every year about 36,000 people die from flu related causes. Some people with certain health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease are more at risk for serious complications. Also at risk are elderly people and young children.

Symptoms of the flu include: fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, and sometimes nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, which are more common in children. Complications of the flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration or chronic medical conditions such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

Flu viruses spread from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with the flu. Sometimes people are infected by touching something with the flu viruses on it, then touching their mouth or nose. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick.

The best way to prevent the flu is to get an annual flu vaccine. There are two types of flu vaccines. 1) The "flu shot" that is given with a needle for people ages 6 months and older. 2) Nasal spray flu vaccine (made with a live virus) given to healthy people ages 2-49 years of age and who are not pregnant.

About two weeks after vaccination antibodies develop that protect against the Influenza virus infection. If you have an allergy to eggs you should not get vaccinated. The best time to get a flu shot is September and October. Peak Flu season is usually in January.

The Grayson County Health Department is recommending everyone get a flu vaccine ages 6 months and older.

What to Know About the Flu: 1) Cover your cough. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue then dispose of the tissue right away. 2) Wash hands frequently or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. (Rub gel in hands until dissolved, about 20 seconds) I do not recommend alcohol based hand sanitizer for younger children since they put their hands in their mouths. 3) If you have a fever stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever has subsided. Must be fever free for 24 hours without taking a fever reducer such as Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc. 4) Get a yearly seasonal flu vaccine.

If you have questions about the flu contact your doctors office or visit www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov on your computer.

*Deborah Bennett Williams, LVN
Bells ISD School Nurse*

FLU CLINICS

**KROGER PHARMACY
SHERMAN 903-868-1565
DENISON 903-465-1991
REQUIRES PERSON TO BE 18 YRS OF AGE TO RECEIVE VACCINE**

**ONE MEDICAL
SHERMAN 903-868-9565**

**GRAYSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPT
SHERMAN 903-893-0131
DENISON 903-465-2878**

**BELLS FAMILY DRUG
BELLS 903-965-7383
REQUIRES PERSON TO BE 18 YRS OF AGE TO RECEIVE VACCINE**

OR CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE