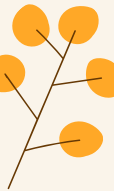





# Staying Healthy This Respiratory Virus Season




With the fall and winter months approaching, we would like to remind you of the ongoing importance of staying vigilant against common respiratory viruses that circulate in our community, such as Influenza (flu), Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), and COVID-19. Working together, we can help protect our students and staff and keep our school community healthy.



## About Influenza, RSV, and COVID-19


While these viruses can cause similar cold-like symptoms, here is what you should know about each:



**Influenza (Flu):** A respiratory illness that often comes on suddenly with symptoms like fever, chills, body aches, cough, and fatigue.

**Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV):** A common respiratory virus that can cause cold-like symptoms in older children and adults. In infants and young children, it can lead to more serious breathing issues, such as wheezing.

**COVID-19:** Caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, COVID-19 can cause a wide range of symptoms, including fever, cough, fatigue, headache, sore throat, and sometimes loss of taste or smell.



## When to keep your child home

Please keep your child home from school if they are sick to help prevent the spread of illness.

### Follow these guidelines before sending your child back to school:



**Fever:** Your child must be fever-free (less than 100 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

**Symptom Improvement:** Symptoms should be improving overall and your child feeling well enough to participate in school before returning.

**Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Your child should not return until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

**Influenza, RSV, or COVID-19 Positive:** If your child tests positive for any of these respiratory viruses, follow guidance from your healthcare provider for treatment. The latest guidelines from the CDC


(<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/prevention/precautions-when-sick.html>) recommends staying home until fever-free for 24 hours and overall symptoms are improving.






## How to prevent the spread of germs

We can significantly reduce the spread of all respiratory viruses by following these practices:




**Encourage frequent handwashing:** Remind your children to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



**Promote cough and sneeze etiquette:** Teach children to cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow, and to throw tissues away immediately.

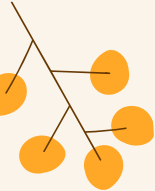
**Consider vaccinations:** Staying up-to-date with vaccinations is one of the most effective ways to protect your family against severe illness. We encourage you to speak with your family's healthcare provider about seasonal flu shots, COVID-19 boosters, and the RSV vaccine, especially for eligible family members.



**Testing:** Depending on your child's symptoms and risk factors, a healthcare provider may recommend testing for the flu, RSV, or COVID-19.


**Stay in contact:** Please notify the school if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness, such as flu, RSV, or COVID-19.

**Timely pick-up:** If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be contacted and expected to pick them up in a timely manner.

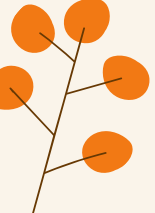


### Support your child's health:

In addition to following general hygiene rules, these key habits are vital for preventing illness and supporting recovery:




**Prioritize rest:** A well-rested body is better equipped to fight off illness. Ensure your child gets adequate sleep each night.



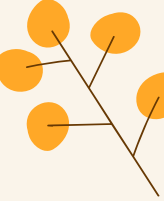
**Encourage hydration:** Drinking plenty of fluids, especially water, helps the body function properly by supporting immune function, preventing dehydration and regulating body temperature.

**Eat nutritious meals:** A balanced diet with fresh fruits and vegetables provides the vitamins and minerals your child needs to stay healthy.




### Our ongoing efforts:

Our school maintains a rigorous cleaning and disinfecting protocol with a focus on high-touch surfaces. We will continue to be diligent in these efforts to help keep our students and staff safe.



Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community healthy. Wishing you and your family a safe and healthy school year!



Julia McAlpin, RN  
District Nurse

