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**HEALTHTEACHER LISTS 7 ACTIONS SCHOOLS CAN TAKE
TO LIMIT THE SPREAD OF SWINE FLU**
A teaching opportunity for schools and parents

NASHVILLE, TN – Schools are often fertile ground for the spreading of germs that lead to illnesses. Considering the current concern about the spread of swine flu, HealthTeacher, in cooperation with the American Association of Health Education (AAHE), has developed seven actions schools can take to limit the spread of germs and reinforce good health habits among students. While there is no cause for alarm, schools should take the following precautions to limit the potential spread of swine flu and other illnesses.

1. Stop the spread of the flu at the door of your school by strongly encouraging students and staff to stay at home if they are sick.
 - a. As the swine flu has multiple symptoms, it is strongly suggested that any student or staff with a body temperature of 100° or higher stay at home. Students or staff who have had a fever should not return to school until it has been more than 24 hours since they last recorded a temperature above 100°.
 - b. If a student presents themselves at school with a fever (body temperature 100° or greater) or other symptoms of the flu, keep them isolated from other students and staff, ideally in a nurse's office, until a parent or guardian has been contacted and safe transportation home can be arranged.
 - c. As an extra precaution, schools can provide respirators/masks (N95 or higher filtering face piece) to school nurses who come in direct with students who have flu symptoms. These respirators/masks could be used by students who have flu symptoms to stop the immediate spread of germs while awaiting transportation home.
2. Use news of the swine flu in the general media as a teachable moment to reinforce good personal hygiene and learn about community and public health.
3. Promote hygiene and cough etiquette by encouraging students to:
 - a. Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the nearest trash receptacle after use. If tissues are not readily available, cough or sneeze into the sleeve of a shirt or jacket by raising the elbow in front of the mouth.
 - b. Wash your hands with soap and water immediately 1) after coughing, 2) after using the restroom, 3) after playing on the playground or sports, 4) before eating a snack or lunch. When washing your hands vigorously rub hands together for 15-20 seconds

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or until you have completed saying the ABCs. If soap and water are not available use an alcohol-based hand gel.

- c. Keep hands away from eyes, nose and mouth when at all possible.
4. Provide disposable tissues and alcohol-based hand gel in every classroom and in teacher lounges.
5. Encourage hand washing before entering the cafeteria, gymnasium or other areas where students congregate. Use antiseptic cleaning spray and clean all table surfaces in the cafeteria between groups of children.
6. If there is an outbreak of influenza in your community, consider alternative teaching methods to those where students have to share instructional materials (building blocks, sports equipment, etc.)
7. Communicate to parents the importance of good personal hygiene in preventing the spread of illness, encouraging them to reinforce good personal hygiene habits at home.

“The swine flu outbreak is an important school health concern as children and youth in close quarters tend to spread illness very quickly through sneezing, coughing and sharing books, toys, etc.,” says Becky Smith, Executive Director of AAHE. “It is hoped that by using this current event as a teachable moment, teachers and school nurses will be able to reaffirm good germ control practices and policies for both school and homes.”

In support, HealthTeacher, an online health education curriculum for schools, is offering over a dozen lesson plans related to Personal Health on its site for free to schools. In addition, HealthTeacher is offering schools at no cost a special edition of its parent newsletter focusing on the role good personal hygiene can play in stopping the spread of germs and the flu. This information is available at www.healthteacher.com.

“We want to help schools and teachers be better prepared to address the growing public health issue of the swine flu,” says Scott McQuigg, CEO of HealthTeacher. “The list of 7 actions along with lesson plans and the parent newsletter will support teachers as they discuss with students the importance of good personal hygiene and demonstrate proper techniques, such as hand washing, to prevent the spread of illness.”

Schools, organizations and media are welcome to reprint our 7 actions. When doing so, please note HealthTeacher and AAHE as sources. (exp: *Source: HealthTeacher and American Association of Health Education*)

About Health Teacher

HealthTeacher is a leading provider of online health education resources for kindergarten through 12th grade and is used by more than 20,000 teachers nationwide. HealthTeacher provides teachers the resources, tools and background material to educate students about making healthy lifestyle choices through more than 300 lesson plans that meet or exceed the National Health Education Standards and the Center for Disease Control’s Core Health Topics. HealthTeacher is an operating unit of ConnectivHealth, a provider of digital content solutions focused on advancing health and wellness. To learn more, visit www.healthteacher.com

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