

Outbreak of Influenza-like Illness at a School

Quick Reference Guide for Nurses and Administrators

COVID-19 updates are in red.

What is an outbreak of an influenza-like illness?



Increased absenteeism throughout the school in association with influenza-like illness.

This includes:

- students who are sent home with fever and cough or sore throat,
- absent students with parental reports of flu, or
- absent students with parental reports of fever and cough or sore throat.

If an outbreak is suspected:

- 1** Report influenza-like illness outbreaks to the Health Department 24/7 by calling **802-863-7240**. The Health Department will ask about symptoms, onset, case totals, grades affected and actions taken.
- 2** If **COVID-19 has been ruled out**, sick students and staff should stay home **until 24 hours after fever has resolved** without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- 3** Start a list of sick students and staff and track symptom onset.

Take action to control the outbreak:

- Encourage washing hands with soap and water **and maintaining a 6-foot distance from others**.
- Provide tissues and no-touch trash cans around the school and in classrooms.
- Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces.
- Send a letter home to parents and caregivers with flu prevention information. **Encourage families to contact their primary care provider with concerns about symptoms.**
- Avoid touching mouth, eyes or nose.
- Encourage students not to share food or drinks.
- Encourage any unvaccinated staff to get vaccinated.
- Recommend that students and their families get vaccinated.
- **Review the [COVID-19 in Pediatric Patients: Triage, Evaluation, Testing and Return to School Guidance](#).**
- **Refer to the [COVID-19 page for schools](#) for up-to-date information.**

For more information:
healthvermont.gov/fluoutbreak