



COUNTY OF POLK
Health Department
www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health

Terri Henkels, Director
1907 Carpenter Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50314
Ph. 515.286.3798
Fax. 515.286.2033

Polk County Parents:

There is currently a world-wide outbreak of H1N1 influenza. There have been confirmed cases in the U.S. including Iowa. We believe if we take the proper precautions we can limit the number of people in Polk County who get sick.

Community schools have plans in place that will help ensure the safety and health of your child. At this time, CDC recommends the primary means to reduce spread of influenza in schools focus on early identification of ill students and staff, staying home when ill, and good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. Decisions about school closure should be at the discretion of local authorities based on local considerations, including public concern and the impact of school absenteeism and staffing shortages. Our goal is to keep kids in school while keeping them healthy and safe.

Currently the schools are reviewing their plans, increasing communication with the Polk County Health Department and monitoring students and staff for signs of illness. The schools will also be taking measure to prevent the spread of germs, such as washing desks, doorknobs, and common spaces more often; discouraging congregation in the hallways; sanitizing buses and encouraging hand washing or the use of hand sanitizers in the classroom. You can practice these measures at home as well. Encourage your children to cough into their arm and teach them how to wash their hands properly and often. Stay home when you are sick and do not let children go to school when they are sick. Try to minimize contact with a person who might be sick.

If you or a member of your family have any of the following symptoms: fever over 100 degrees F, cough, sore throat and nasal congestion, call your doctor before going in. Polk County Health Department discourages use of urgent care clinics or walking into the emergency room as this can spread the virus to others. Your doctor can give you directions on what to do if you need to be seen. Your doctor can give you directions on what to do if you need to be seen. If you do not have a health care provider contact Polk County Health Department

There is no evidence to indicate where a person was born or the language they speak poses any additional risks.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.