



April 27, 2009

Dear School Administrator:

This letter is to provide you with timely information about the new influenza strain and how you, your staff, and students can prevent illness. The pattern of illness indicates this new strain of influenza is likely transmitted from person-to-person. No cases of swine influenza have been detected in Utah.

Symptoms of flu-like illness are fever, cough, sore throat, headache, chills, body aches myalgias, fatigue, and possibly vomiting and diarrhea. If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school if ill. Contact your medical provider for recommendations and possible treatment.

Flu viruses are spread mostly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Persons may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick. So influenza can be spread before the person is sick and while the person is sick. Following the simple steps below will prevent influenza related illness.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue away when finished.
- Wash hands often with soap and water and especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Use an alcohol hand cleaner if water is not immediately available.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth since germs are spread this way.
- Keep surfaces (tables, doorknobs, telephones, etc.) clean by wiping them frequently with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

Decisions regarding school dismissal, to reduce disease transmission, will be made by the Salt Lake Valley Health Department in conjunction with district administration. Please share these important reminders with school staff and students to help them stay healthy. If you have questions, you can reach us at (801) 534-4600. We appreciate your help in disease prevention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dagmar Vitek". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dagmar Vitek, M.D.
Deputy Director
Salt Lake Valley Health Department