

Dear TMES families,

Since this week is **National Influenza Vaccination Week** (January 10-16) I thought it would be a good opportunity to review preventative measures regarding Seasonal and H1N1 Flu. H1N1 flu vaccinations are much more readily available now. Please see CDC information below and review **everyday preventaive actions** with your children.

Thank you for helping to make TMES safe and healthy.

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## **CDC Says “Take 3” Actions to Fight the Flu**

***These actions will protect against 2009 H1N1 too!***

*Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in the United States, on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from seasonal flu complications.*

*This flu season there is a new and very different influenza virus causing illness called 2009 H1N1. Flu is unpredictable, but CDC expects flu to continue causing illness, hospital stays and deaths, caused by either 2009 H1N1 viruses or regular seasonal flu viruses.*

*The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (the flu):*



**[Take time to get a flu vaccine.](#)**

- CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Seasonal flu vaccine also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from making them sick.
- Remaining supplies of seasonal flu vaccine are limited at this time in this season.
- A seasonal vaccine will not protect you against 2009 H1N1.
- A vaccine against the 2009 H1N1 virus has been produced and is the best way to protect against the pandemic virus. Supplies of this vaccine are increasing and many places have opened up vaccination to anyone who wants it. [Find a vaccine.](#)
- People at greatest risk for 2009 H1N1 infection include children, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease.



### **Take everyday preventive actions.**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- If you are sick with flu–like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other measures to keep your distance from others to lessen the spread of flu.



### **Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.**

- If you get seasonal or 2009 H1N1 flu, antiviral drugs can treat the flu.
- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early to treat people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with flu–like symptoms and who are at increased risk of serious flu complications, such as pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older and people with chronic health conditions. (Most people have been able to recover at home from 2009 H1N1 without needing medical care and the same is true of seasonal flu.)
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- Antiviral drugs are not sold over–the–counter and are different from antibiotics.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including 2009 H1N1 and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.
- Visit CDC's [2009 H1N1 website](#) to find out what to do if you get sick with the flu and how to care for someone at home who is sick with the flu.