

November 21, 2016

Notice to Parents or Guardians

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Re: Respiratory Illness at Ecole La Verendrye

Ecole La Verendrye has recently experienced an increase in numbers of children ill with influenza like illness. Influenza like illness (ILI) is defined as the sudden onset of respiratory symptoms with new cough AND with one or more of: fever, sore throat, muscle aches, joint pain, weakness or extreme fatigue. The germs that cause illness can be easily spread from one child to another through coughing and secretions from the nose and mouth. The recommended control measures are effective for any respiratory virus.

Public health is required to investigate increased illness to assist in the identification of the illness and minimize spread of the illness. Recommendations for parents:

1. Children who are ill with a respiratory illness should not attend the school until they are free of symptoms, feeling well, and are able to fully participate in all activities.
2. Ensure that your child and others in your household wash their hands frequently, to prevent spread of illness in your home.
3. Promote and remind your child and others in your household to practice respiratory hygiene:
 - o cough and sneeze into their sleeve or
 - o cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
 - o discard used tissues immediately after sneezing, coughing or wiping their nose.
 - o perform hand hygiene as described above.
4. Ensure that high touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis in your home. These surfaces should include door handles, bathrooms, faucets, light switches, etc.
5. This illness may be Influenza, as the Influenza virus is circulating in Southern Alberta. Immunization is the single most effective means of preventing Influenza. It's not too late to be immunized. All Albertans (six months of age and older) are still eligible to received the immunizations, free of charge. Remember, it takes up to two weeks after receiving influenza vaccine to be protected against influenza. Influenza immunization is available by contacting your local health unit, pharmacies or some physician offices.
6. For more information on childhood illness, immunization or general health information, visit www.albertahealthservices.ca or www.myhealth.alberta.ca or call Health Link Alberta, toll-free at 8-1-1.

Public Health staff is working closely with child care staff to limit potential spread of the illness. Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the school nurse at public health: 403-388-6666.

Sincerely,
Alberta Health Services

Per:

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Medical Officer of Health
Alberta Health Services – South Zone

Community Health Offices • Environmental Public Health

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