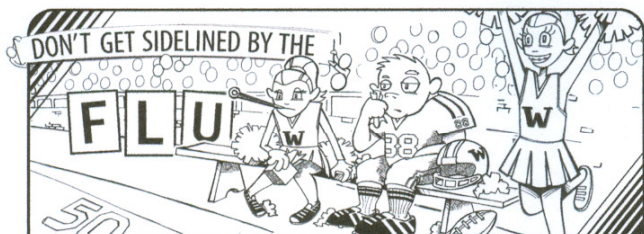


FLU ADVISORY

It is important that we work together and take precautions to keep our school and children healthy. Viruses spread easily among children in schools, and families with school-age children have more infections than others, with an average of one-third of these family members infected each year. By keeping our children flu-free we benefit the community as a whole. Additionally, healthy students miss fewer days of school, which results in less stress on the family. Following are tips on how you can help keep your family healthy:



- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccination is the first line of defense in preventing the flu
 - Students and parents – especially those with chronic medical conditions – should get a flu shot. It is never too late in the season to get your child vaccinated. You should also get a flu shot to avoid spreading the flu to your child
- If your child has the flu, he or she should stay home from school
- Students who may have the flu should not participate in sports, choir or any activities that involve close contact
- You should talk with your child about practicing good health habits, including:
 - Washing hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
 - Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and discarding the tissue in a trash can
- You can help keep your child healthy by disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, toys and other commonly shared items
- If you are concerned about your child's flu symptoms, call your doctor early. Call your doctor immediately if your child has a chronic disease. Some children might benefit from an antiviral medication, which can be prescribed by a physician and can help lessen the duration of the virus and reduce the risk of complications
 - To be effective, antiviral medication should be taken within 12-48 hours after flu symptoms begin
- If someone in your family gets the flu, a doctor can prescribe antiviral medications for other members of the family to prevent them from getting sick
 - Studies show that some antiviral medication is up to 89 percent effective in preventing the flu when taken once daily for seven days
- In addition, if your child has the flu, he/she should stay home from school, rest and drink plenty of liquids
- Notify the school nurse if your child has the flu.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE INFLUENZA VIRUS, VISIT WWW.CDC.GOV/FLU



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For additional information:

www.scdhec.gov

1-800-CDC-INFO

1-803-898-7769 (Jim Beasley, DHEC Public Information Officer)