

Flu Season is upon us.

Influenza and flu-like illness has symptoms of fever/chills, cough, muscle aches and headaches.

To help reduce the spread of an influenza illness (flu) in early childhood centres and schools, we recommend the following actions:

1. Children or staff with flu-like symptoms should not be at your school In general a flu-like illness lasts 3-4 days but it can be up to 7 days.

People worried about their symptoms or who have an underlying condition that makes them vulnerable to severe influenza illness, for example - asthma, can telephone Health line 0800 611 116 or their family doctor for further advice.

If children or staff become unwell with flu-like symptoms while at their school, they need to go home to be cared for.

2. Prevent the spread of germs make sure everyone covers their mouth and nose with tissues when coughing and sneezing and put used tissues in a covered bin or a plastic bag.

3. Encourage children and staff to wash their hands regularly. Clean hands are the single most important factor in preventing the spread of germs. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water, then dry them for 20 seconds with a dry towel or paper towel.

Regularly clean surfaces that are touched a lot (e.g. door handles, bench tops, and toilet and bathroom areas). The flu viruses can live up to 48 hours on hard surfaces. One of the most effective and cheap disinfecting solutions to clean surfaces is a solution of household bleach and water.

For fuller instructions follow this link.

<http://www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/early-childhood-centres/current-illnesses/influenza/>

Check out the RPH web site with wellness tips for winter.

<http://www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/winter-wellness/>

Any further queries contact your Public Health Nurse: Kere Bennett 027 273 0416

