

School Nurse's Corner

Flu Season

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone older than 6 months of age should get a flu vaccine every season.
- Get vaccinated if you are at risk for developing complications from getting sick with flu (this especially includes people with asthma, diabetes, chronic lung disease, pregnant women, children of 6 months to 5 years of age and people age 65 years and older). Caregivers and people who live with those at high risk of developing serious complications from flu should also get vaccinated.
- Get vaccinated against influenza as soon as the vaccine becomes available in your area.
- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body.



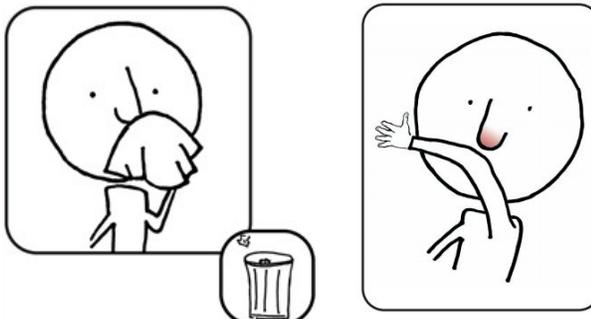
Common Cold

Signs and Symptoms

- Runny or stuffy nose, and sneezing
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Mild fever
- Fatigue, muscle aches

Prevention

- Try to stay clear of people who have a cold
- Wash your hands frequently
- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing
- Do not use the eating utensils or drink from the same glass as someone who has a cold



Common Cold - What to Do to Ease Discomfort



- Use a cool-mist humidifier
- Use saline (saltwater) drops for the nostrils
- Drink lots of fluids (for example water), but no caffeinated drinks
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen as needed (check with your doctor for dosing)
- Never give cold or cough medicine to children under 4 years old (always call a doctor)
- **Never give aspirin** to a child

Call the Doctor if a Child Has:

- Cold symptoms that get worse or last more than a week
- Cough and congestion triggered by pollen, dust, pets, etc.
- A barking cough or a cough that is severe and occurs in spasm
- Difficulty breathing
- Coughing up a lot of mucus
- Shortness of breath
- Unusual lethargy/tiredness
- Poor fluid intake
- Increasing headache and throat pain
- Severely painful sore throat that interferes with swallowing
- Fever of 103° F (39.3° Celsius) or higher, or a fever of 101° F (38.0° C) or higher that lasts for more than a day
- Chest or stomach pain
- Swollen glands (lymph nodes) in the neck
- Ear pain

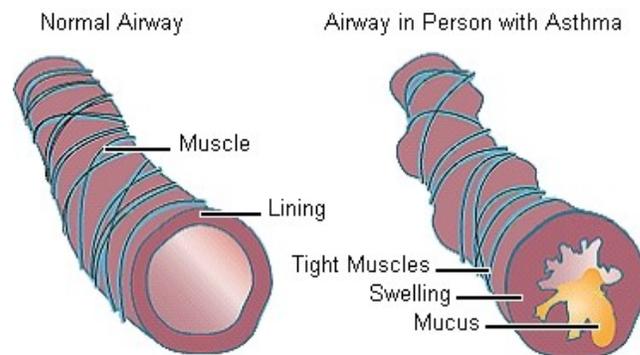


Please, do not send your child to school until at least 24 hours have passed since his/her temperature first remained normal without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Asthma Basics

Almost 25 million people in the U. S. have asthma. More than seven million asthma patients are children less than 18 years of age (National Heart Lung and Blood Institute).

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition characterized by airway inflammation and constriction of smooth muscles around airways.



Asthma symptoms include: coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness.

There is no cure for asthma, but with proper management it can be effectively controlled.

Asthma management includes trigger avoidance and medical management.

Because asthma has two components, two different types of medications need to be used to manage it:

1. To relax the smooth muscles around airways **for quick relief** - use the rescue inhaler (for example albuterol). **ALWAYS CARRY YOUR RESCUE INHALER WITH YOU!**
2. For inflammation management and **the long control** - the inhaled corticosteroids are usually used (for example Flovent). Other types of anti-inflammatory medications may be added as needed.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE THE CONTROLLER MEDICATION EVERY DAY AS PRESCRIBED TO PREVENT ASTHMA ATTACKS.

According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism due to a chronic condition, accounting for nearly 13 million missed school days per year"

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

- Respiratory tract infection
- Highly contagious
- The disease starts like the common cold, but after 1–2 weeks, severe coughing can begin
- Pertussis can cause violent and rapid coughing with a loud "whooping" sound
- In infants, the cough can be minimal or not even there, they may instead have life-threatening pauses in breathing (apnea)

Experts estimate that up to one million cases of whooping cough occur each year in the United States, across all age groups.

(National Foundation for Infectious Diseases)

When you or your child develop a cold that includes a prolonged or severe cough, it may be pertussis. The best way to know is to contact your doctor.

The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated.

Infants and Children need five DTaP shots.

- At 2, 4 and 6 months of age
- Between 15-18 months of age
- Between 4-6 years of age

Preteens and Teens

A booster vaccine, called Tdap, at 11 years of age

Adults 19 years of age and older who didn't get Tdap as a preteen or teen should get one dose of Tdap.



Things to Know About Head Lice

- Head lice are parasites that feed on human blood. Nits are head lice eggs .
- They only dwell on the scalp and human hair.
- Head lice are not affected by hair hygiene.
- Daily shampooing will not prevent head lice or kill them.
- Head lice cannot jump or fly.
- Hot water will not kill lice.
- Special shampoos are available to kill nits and lice.
- Head lice can survive up to 24 hours off the human host.
- Avoid sharing hats, combs, hairbrushes, hair accessories, and towels with friends as a way of preventing head lice.

