

September 22, 2009

Dear Parents:

The academic year at Christian Brothers Academy is well underway and the beginning first weeks of school have been a most positive and enriching experience. As we prepare to bring a close to the month of September and begin the month of October, it is important that we familiarize ourselves with information regarding the flu season – in particular, the detection and prevention of the flu and the newest strain known as the “H1N1” virus (swine flu). While it is difficult to predict exactly what will happen this fall, we need to be prepared for this flu season.

DETECTION:

Flu-like symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees F.), feverishness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or stuffy nose. Additional symptoms may be experienced with swine flu, including muscle pain, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.

Flu spreads easily. If you suspect your son or daughter is getting the flu, it is important that he/she does NOT attend school or go anywhere else – such as the mall, or sporting events – where other people would be exposed to flu germs.

PREVENTION:

- *Vaccination if available:* The single best way to protect yourself and your children from the flu is to get a flu shot. A flu shot for the H1N1 flu virus is scheduled to become available in mid-October. Please be sure to contact your health care provider to inquire about the availability of this vaccination.
- *Hand washing:* Encourage your children to wash their hands often. Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal.
- *Use of hand sanitizers:* Gels, rubs, and hand wipes all work well, as long as they contain at least 60% alcohol. Hand wipes must be disposed of properly. Always read and follow label instructions when using hand sanitizers. (We will equip all of our classrooms and offices as CBA with hand sanitizers for use by faculty/staff and students as needed.)
- *Personal hygiene:* Encourage your children to keep their hands away from their face and avoid touching their mouth, nose or eyes. Stress with them the importance of covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve – not your hands!
- *Routine cleaning:* Our school’s custodial staff will routinely clean areas that students and staff touch often with cleaners they typically use.

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PLANNING TIPS:

- Develop a plan if your son or daughter becomes sick and needs to stay home for 3 to 5 days with the flu.
- Make sure that our school has all the current contact and emergency contact information necessary for your son/daughter.
- If your son/daughter becomes ill with the flu, be sure to check with his/her teachers for assignments, the need for textbooks, etc. It would also be advisable to keep in touch with his/her teachers through netclassroom and email messaging.

People who are at high risk for influenza complications and who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care providers as soon as possible. People at risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases. I do NOT anticipate the need for closing our school for any extended period of time as a result of an excessively large number of absences due to the flu. Please be assured that we will work with our school nurse, other school districts and the local Health Department to make sure that we are doing everything we can to protect the health of our students at Christian Brothers Academy.

Sincerely,

Brother Joseph Jozwiak, FSC
Principal