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Dear Parent:

Business Administration
(402) 444-7216

Child Care Nurse
Consultant
(402) 444-6426

Epidemiology
(402) 444-7214

Food and Drink
(402) 444-7480

Health Data
(402) 444-7213

Health Promotion
(402) 444-7475

Lead Prevention Program
(402) 444-7825

Public Health Nursing
(402) 444-4639

Sanitation Control
(402) 444-7481

Sanitary Engineering
(402) 444-7485

Vital Statistics
(402) 444-7204

WIC
(402) 444-1770

Health Center Location:
42nd & Woolworth Avenue
Omaha, NE 68105

Immunizations
(402) 444-6163

Dental Services
(402) 444-7349

Laboratory Services
(402) 444-7496

STD Control
(402) 444-7750

Travel Clinic
(402) 444-7207

2008

A new strain of the influenza virus, called the Novel 2009 Influenza A H1N1 virus (also known as "swine flu"), has circulated in our community this summer and into to the new school year. We are aware of cases of influenza, or "flu," in students across the community, but only a small fraction of people with influenza are seen by their provider and tested for flu. Most people with flu simply stay home and recover after a few days. Individual testing is not usually necessary. Recommendations for caring for someone with the new 2009 H1N1 virus are the same as for seasonal influenza.

Every year during flu season, various strains of the flu virus circulate in the community, and most people have some immunity because the viruses only change slightly. The difference this year is that persons under the age of 65 appear to have no immunity to the new flu virus.

The health department is working closely with schools and health care providers to monitor flu conditions and make decisions and recommendations about the best steps to take to protect students and staff.

Here are a few things you can do to help:

- Teach your children to wash their hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.
Teach your children not to share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.
Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.
Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.
Do not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.
If someone in the household develops flu, keep this person isolated from others in the household; minimize any contact between the ill and healthy persons.

The best way to prevent flu is vaccination. Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.

For more information, visit www.douglascountyhealth.com, www.cdc.gov, or www.flu.gov. Or call the Douglas County Health Department at (402) 444-7214 for assistance.

Handwritten signature of Adi M. Pour

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