

Currently in Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties flu activity is increasing with 92 reported cases for the 2017-2018 flu season. Healthcare facilities, long-term care and area schools are reporting increased number of flu cases. The predominating strain is influenza A (H3N2) which has been associated with some hospitalizations and deaths. Currently there are 86 influenza deaths in Washington State for the current flu season; 1 reported death from Stevens County. To help identify students and staff that should return home or be encouraged to seek medical treatment, please review the following:

Typical symptoms of flu illness include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue

There are some danger/**warning signs** that should prompt immediate medical care in children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In addition to the signs above, get medical help right away if an infant has any of these signs:

- Unable to eat
- Has trouble breathing
- Has no tears when crying
- Significantly fewer wet diapers than normal

Recommendations for all students and staff:

- Get a flu shot
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. Or use hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available
- Cover your cough
- Stay away from sick people as much as possible
- Stay home if you have
 - Fever
 - Sore Throat

Screen parents and visitors entering the school:

- Ask if they have had fever, cough or sore throat in the last 24hrs
 - Yes: ask them to wear a mask, wash hands frequently and leave facility if it is not necessary for them to be there
 - No: encourage frequent hand washing while at the facility

Remember, unless they require immediate medical attention, have individuals with flu symptoms contact their doctor prior to going in for an appointment. The emergency room is for individuals who are very sick. You should not go to the emergency room if you are mildly ill.