

# H1N1 “swine” Flu

As most people are aware from press coverage, H1N1 flu is a variant of influenza to which much of the population, particularly those under 30 years old, has little resistance. Most patients exhibit symptoms like other types of influenza, are moderately ill, and recover after about a week. In a very small percentage of cases, the disease causes complications and is fatal. It has been called a pandemic by the World Health Organisation because of the number of cases and its widespread occurrence, not because of severity of symptoms. Places where large number of people gather, such as schools, are ideal for the acceleration of the spread of the virus.

The Department of Health intends to offer vaccination to the whole population but while the supply of vaccine is awaited, I am asking that the pupils and staff of The High School take the following precautions in the interests of minimising this unpleasant illness and in the hope that we can keep the school running normally during the autumn. If it becomes necessary to close, the text system will be used to inform you.

**DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS UNTIL H1N1 FLU HAS BEEN RULED OUT BY YOUR DOCTOR AND UNTIL YOU ARE FEELING BETTER:**

1. High temperature
2. Sore throat or runny nose
3. Newly apparent coughing or sneezing
4. Headache, vomiting or diarrhoea
5. Sore limbs or muscles that have no obvious explanation
6. Flu like sensitivity to touch
7. Shivers or hot/cold feeling alternating

**Even if you think you have a “normal” cold or hayfever –  
DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL UNTIL YOU KNOW FOR SURE**

While in school and after being in public places or in contact with other people, wash your hands frequently with hot water and soap. Cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze – use tissue only once. Move away from people who cough or sneeze. Avoid unnecessary closeness to other people, such as hugging and kissing while greeting. Avoid touching door handles and surfaces.

It is expected that vaccination will become progressively more easily available as the autumn progresses and eventually the above precautions will no longer be necessary.

In the meantime, the cooperation of all will substantially reduce the risk of illness. Thank you.

B.T. Duffy, Principal (advice is from Department of Education & Science information)  
August 2009