



NOTES FROM THE NURSE

Parents,

The cold and flu season has arrived. It is National Influenza Vaccination Week. According to the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control, the “flu”, or influenza, is a respiratory illness caused by a virus. The most common symptoms include:

Fever of 100 or more
Chills
Headache
Muscle aches
Extreme tiredness
Dry cough
Sore throat
Runny or stuffy nose

Children can have stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, but these are uncommon in adults. “Stomach flu”, or gastroenteritis, may also have the stomach symptoms but is not caused by influenza.

The incubation period for influenza is 1-4 days.

A person is contagious for 3-7 days on average, but children may be contagious longer.

If your child has these symptoms he/she should stay home from school.

Children must be fever-free without the use of medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, for 24 hours before returning to school.

Students that return to school too early may infect others, leading to further spread of the disease.

One of the best ways to protect yourself and your family is through frequent handwashing, avoidance of crowds and getting a flu vaccination.

For more information on the influenza and how to protect yourself, click on the following link:

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/fighttheflu/>

With your cooperation, hopefully we can lessen the frequency of illnesses this winter.

Donna Zenger RN, BSN, ILCSN, M.Ed
District Nurse