

Dear Parent/Guardian:

To reduce the spread of disease caused by the ongoing circulation of H1N1 (swine) flu, a vaccine will soon become available. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified students associated with Kindergarten through Grade 12 schools as one of the priority groups to receive this vaccine.

Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu can be a serious contagious disease. An important step in protecting your child from H1N1 flu is to receive the H1N1 flu vaccine. In order to quickly and efficiently vaccinate school age children, Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) will be on-site to administer the vaccine to our students. HCPH is working with local schools to vaccinate school age children in order to assure area physicians are available to vaccinate children younger than four and those with chronic health conditions.

Due to staggered vaccine availability, we will contact you with the date and time of vaccination.

Having your child immunized against the H1N1 virus is your choice. However, public health experts advise that immunizations are one of the most effective ways to prevent serious illness in children.

We appreciate your help and ask that you take the following steps.

- Review the enclosed packet.
- Complete the Student Consent Form. Everyone must complete and return this form, even if you choose not to have your child vaccinated.
- Return completed consent form to [school to insert address or location] by October 9.
- Review the Vaccine Information Statement. This document will answer many of your questions regarding the vaccine and also describes risk factors.
- Review Hamilton County Public Health's Notice of Privacy Practices. This notice describes how medical information may be disclosed and how you can get access to this information.
- Refer to the Know the Facts sheet for any additional questions you may have. This covers the reason vaccine is being administered in schools and other prevention measures to take.
- Be sure that your child wears a short-sleeved shirt on the vaccination day.
- Follow public health advice regarding prevention measures such as hand washing and coughing/sneezing etiquette, monitoring your family members for H1N1 symptoms, staying home from work or school if symptoms are present – especially fever, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures. These measures continue to be important even though an H1N1 vaccine is available because they can help prevent the spread of most of the germs that cause illness.

Hamilton County Public Health has advised that vaccinating school age children is very important in controlling the severity of illness in our community. Please visit www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org for more information about H1N1 flu and the vaccine.

We appreciate your cooperation. Please contact us with any questions.