



MOREHOUSE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

"Obtaining Excellence in Education Through Quality Teaching"

4099 Naff Avenue
Post Office Box 872
Bastrop, LA 71220
(318) 281-5784
Fax (318) 283-3456

TOM THROWER
Superintendent

Phillip McCready, President
District 3

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District 7

Mrs. Lisa Chain
District 1

Mrs. Sylvia Reese
District 2

Jeff Churchwell
District 4

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October 7, 2009

Dear Parents:

There have been some physician-diagnosed cases of H1N1 flu within the school system; however, there haven't been a significant number of cases to cause alarm. The Morehouse Parish nursing department is working diligently with area agencies to stay updated on all information related to H1N1 protocols.

It is the goal of the Morehouse Parish School Board to maintain safety and good health for all the children of this parish. At this time, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is NOT recommending school closures or dismissals if there are confirmed or suspected cases of the flu, so flu identification and patient isolation are key steps in preventing the spread of the flu.

The school nurses are working with the Morehouse Parish Health Unit, and we will notify parents when the H1N1 vaccine is available for the students in the parish. The signs/symptoms of the H1N1 flu are the following: sore throat, fever, body aches, severe coughing, or vomiting. A student is to remain home for a minimum of three days and must be fever-free for at least twenty-four hours upon returning to school and no longer have a fever or signs of fever (without use of fever reducing medicines).

The Morehouse Parish School Board has taken necessary precautions in preventing the spread of the flu in the parish. With approved disinfectants our school custodians and staff are routinely cleaning areas that students and staff touch often. Numerous times throughout the day they are cleaning bathrooms, classrooms, gyms, cafeterias, and water fountains.

We will be looking at school absenteeism rates and the number of students with flu-like illness sent home during the school day to determine how many of our students are diagnosed with this flu or flu-like illness. We will keep everyone abreast of the situation as we go through the flu season. If you have any questions, please feel free to call one of the school nurses, and we will be glad to help. For additional information, please visit the websites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals.

Sincerely,

Tom Thrower, Superintendent
Morehouse Parish School System

Ralph Davenport, Supervisor
Child Welfare and Attendance

Darlene Blackard, RN
School Nurse

April Chafford-Scott, RN
School Nurse

Audrey Rayford, RN
School Nurse

Know the Difference between A Cold & Swine Flu Symptoms

Symptom	Cold	Swine Flu
Fever	Fever is rare with a cold.	Fever is usually present with the flu in up to 80% of all flu cases. A temperature of 100°F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the flu.
Coughing	A hacking, productive mucus-producing cough is often present with a cold.	A nonproductive (non-mucus producing) cough is usually present with the flu (sometimes referred to as dry cough).
Aches	Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.	Severe aches and pains are common with the flu.
Stuffy Nose	Stuffy nose is commonly present with a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.	Stuffy nose is not commonly present [with the flu.]
Chills	Chills are uncommon with a cold.	50% of people who have the flu experience chills.
Tiredness	Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.	Tiredness is moderate to severe with the flu.
Sneezing	Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.	Sneezing is not common with the flu.
Sudden Symptoms	Cold symptoms tend to develop over a few days.	The flu has a rapid onset within 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.
Headache	A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.	A headache is very common with the flu, present in 80% of flu cases.
Sore Throat	Sore throat is commonly present with a cold.	Sore throat is not commonly present with the flu.
Chest Discomfort	Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.	Chest discomfort is often severe with the flu.