

Influenza A – H1N1

In an effort to keep everyone abreast of the efforts being made to minimize the spread of the H1N1 Influenza Virus and to communicate plans for treatment/containment should a case be diagnosed in Whitley County, the WCCS nursing staff met with members of the Whitley County Commissioners, Whitley County Health Department, Indiana State Health Department and city officials Monday May 4, 2009.

Whitley County Consolidated School nurses along with the superintendent keep in close contact with our local health department, who in turn work very closely with the Indiana State Health department. Our local Health Officer, Dr. Lisa Hatcher wants to remind people that there is currently no epidemic and the best way to prevent an epidemic is to follow a few simple guidelines to prevent the spread of disease.

- *Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- *Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve, rather than your hands, if a tissue is not available.
- *Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- *If you get sick, **stay home** from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

The symptoms of influenza in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal influenza and include, fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and Coughing. Some people with Influenza A (H1N1) also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

What to do if you think you may have H1N1 Influenza

Contact your physician immediately-treatment with antiviral drugs needs to be started within 24 hours of developing symptoms. Depending on your symptoms, your doctor may perform a test to determine whether or not you have Influenza. Results are available in about 10 minutes; if it is positive for Type A influenza, further testing through the Indiana State Department of Health is needed to determine if it is H1N1.

Stay home (from work, church, school, the mall).

Persons with H1N1 Influenza are considered contagious a day or 2 prior to illness onset up to 7 days following illness onset.