

Friday, February 28, 2020

The Clinton Public Schools has been monitoring the information related to influenza and the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) that is emerging in parts of the world. The Connecticut River Area Health District (CRAHD) provides support and guidance to the Town of Clinton on health-related matters and they are in weekly contact with the CT Department of Health and the Center for Communicable Diseases (CDC).

The following bulletin from the CT Department of Health includes information about COVID-19, as well as information on how to minimize exposure and reduce the spread of cold and flu viruses:

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) OVERVIEW

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and which continues to expand. On February 11, 2020, the [World Health Organization](#) named the disease as *coronavirus disease 2019*, abbreviated COVID-19. COVID-19 illnesses, most of them associated with travel from Wuhan, also are being reported in a growing number of [international locations](#), including the [United States](#). Imported cases of COVID-19 in travelers have been [detected in the U.S.](#) Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 also has been seen among close contacts of returned travelers from Wuhan, but at this time, this virus is NOT currently spreading in the community in the United States. **There are no confirmed cases in Connecticut at this time.**

In Connecticut and throughout the world, [influenza](#) (flu) activity is high. Unless you have traveled to or from Wuhan, China, or been in close contact with a confirmed infected person for a prolonged period of time, it is likely that symptoms you experience are caused by the [flu](#). The CDC encourages all people aged 6 months and older to be vaccinated. It is not too late to get vaccinated for the flu. Check with your healthcare provider, call your [local health department](#), or visit the [HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#) (adults) for availability of flu vaccinations.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. Person-to-person spread of the virus is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Much is still unknown about how the virus spreads. Take these everyday preventative actions to help stop the spread of any germs that may cause illness:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then through the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

In addition, our school health offices ask that parents communicate with the school when students are out with illness. In addition, **students should remain at home from school with the following symptoms of common illness or disease:**

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater. Students should be fever-free without use of a fever-reducing medication for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.
- Have an undiagnosed rash.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea. Students should remain at home until they have stopped vomiting for at least 24 hours and are able to tolerate fluids and solid foods.
- Complain of severe earache, with or without fever.
- A persistent/disruptive cough lasting for more than a few days or with fever.
- Until treatment for conjunctivitis is initiated.
- Have a communicable disease (flu, measles, pertussis, to name a few).

We continue to implement our district and school hygiene and cleaning protocols for cold and flu. We also monitor the attendance patterns and illness of students and staff in our schools.

For more information regarding the Novel Coronavirus, please click on the following links.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

Feel free to contact your student's school nurse or Donna Frechette, RN Supervisor of Health Offices with any questions or concerns.

Maryann O'Donnell

Superintendent of Schools