



## TIPS FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE HELP KEEP YOUR CHILD HEALTHY AND FLU FREE

With flu season upon us, it is important to keep our children healthy. Children are more likely than adults to get sick with the flu. Usually flu is spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Occasionally, people get the flu from touching a germ-infested surface.

It is important to know the difference between cold and flu. Common symptoms of the flu include high fever, severe headache, muscle and body aches, chills, sore throat, exhaustion and dry cough. Children may also have nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Often cold symptoms come on gradually and they include stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat and hacking cough.

### **SIMPLE STEPS FOR KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY:**

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the best way to prevent your child from getting the flu is to take him/her to get a flu vaccine.
- Talk to you child about practicing good health habits, such as:
  - Washing hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
  - Covering mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing-preferably into the inside of the elbow or with a tissue and disposing of the tissue immediately into the trash
  - Avoiding sharing drinks, water bottles, eating utensils and cell phones
  - Avoiding touching their eyes, nose and mouth**
- You can help prevent the flu from spreading at home by disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, toys and other commonly shared items.
- You can prevent spreading illness to others by keeping your sick children home from school until they have been without fever for 24 hours. It is important for your sick child to get rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- Some children may benefit from an antiviral medication, which can be prescribed by a doctor to help lessen the number of days that a child is sick with the virus. To be effective, antiviral medication should be taken within 12-48 hours after the flu symptoms begin. A doctor may also prescribe the antiviral to prevent the child from getting the flu if taken within the first 12-48 hours of exposure to the flu virus.