

H1N1 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Bend-La Pine Schools is working closely with the County Health Department, state health, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding recommendations they provide related to the H1N1 flu virus.

Parents and staff are advised to refer to the www.bend.k12.or.us website for current information and helpful links that provide information related to H1N1.

The following are some of the most frequently asked questions about H1N1. If you need additional information, it is available through the state and CDC links off our district web page.

1. Will H1N1 (swine) flu come back this fall?

Public health experts expect that H1N1 flu will come back this fall and will spread in communities at the same time as the seasonal flu.

2. What can I do to keep my child from getting sick?

It is important to teach your children how to reduce their risk of getting the flu and how to protect others from becoming infected. *If we all practice good hygiene, we can limit the spread of flu in our schools. Parents can:*

- **State and Federal Health Professionals recommend that you get your child both the H1N1 and seasonal flu shots.** Vaccination is the best way to keep your child from getting the flu.
- **Teach your children to wash their hands often.** Washing with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds is ideal (about as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice). Gels, rubs, and hand wipes with a 60% alcohol base also work well. Parents are encouraged to provide sanitizer for their students to use at school. Watch small children using gels so they don’t swallow it.
- **Teach your children to cough or sneeze into their elbow—not their hands!** Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of their elbow. They should wash their hands after blowing their nose or coughing into a tissue.
- **Teach your children to avoid touching their nose, mouth or eyes.** They should keep their hands away from their face.
- **Remind children not to share personal items with others.** Do not use cups, bottles, towels, clothing, etc. of others. Any physical contact with others (shaking hands, hugging, etc.) increases the risk to flu exposure.

3. What preventive measures are being taken by Bend-La Pine Schools to prevent the spread of H1N1 among students?

- Schools are provided with the most current, accurate information available from state and federal health agencies regarding H1N1.
- Our school nurses and staff will be monitoring student illness daily, especially those students with flu-like symptoms.
- Campus teachers and other staff will continue to educate students about the importance of hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Schools will have sanitizers available for hands and surface areas.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are being installed at the entrance of each school for visitor, staff, and student use.
- All of our staff will be alert to the symptoms of H1N1 and direct students to the health station for evaluation to determine if they should be sent home.
- Campus custodial, cafeteria staff, and transportation personnel will adhere to specified cleaning protocols each day.

4. Should my child come to school if he/she has any flu-like symptoms?

No, if your child is ill prior to coming to campus he/she should remain home. Also, individuals who are ill should not come to school or school events.

5. Will my child be sent home if he/she is diagnosed with flu symptoms?

Yes, to stop the spread of flu and to protect others, students with fever or other flu symptoms will be sent home. Our schools are equipped to provide temporary care for ill students. This is usually for the time it takes for the parent to arrange to take the student home. We would avoid having students with flu symptoms from traveling on school buses to limit the spread of the disease.

6. How long should my child stay out of school should he or she exhibit flu-like symptoms?

Students with flu like symptoms (fever with cough or sore throat) should not attend school for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone. Fever should be gone without the use of fever reducing medicine.

7. What are the symptoms of the H1N1 flu?

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza and include fever, lethargy (no energy), a lack of appetite and coughing. Some people also may have a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

8. Should the sibling of a child exhibiting flu-like symptoms stay home?

At this time, Health Department officials are not recommending that siblings of sick students remain at home unless they too are exhibiting flu-like symptoms.

9. Will Bend-La Pine close schools should a single case of H1N1 be confirmed at a campus?

The CDC is not advising school closure for a suspected or confirmed case of H1N1 and, in general, is not advising this unless there is a large percentage of faculty or student absenteeism that interferes with the school's ability to function.

10. What should I do if my child is sick?

Flu spreads easily from person to person. If you think your child is getting the flu:

- Keep your child home. It is very important that your child does not go to school or other places where they could spread the flu virus to other people, such as group childcare, after school programs, the mall, or sporting events.
- Call your doctor's office and let them know your child's symptoms and history. Your doctor will advise you whether you should come to the office. It is best to call ahead so that you help prevent spreading illness to others.
- Call your child's school to notify them that they are sick, and let them know if your child has flu-like symptoms.
- Do not give your child or teenager (18 years of age or younger) aspirin or products containing aspirin due to the rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
- **All individuals with flu-like symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, without using fever-reducing medicines.** These medicines include Motrin or Advil (ibuprofen), Tylenol (acetaminophen) or a store brand. Keeping children with a fever at home will keep them from getting other people sick. For most people, this will be about 4 days.