



# CARMEL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**ANDY IRVIN**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

January 25, 2018

Dear Parents and Staff:

As you are aware, influenza has continued to be an issue throughout the country, our state and the region. Currently, we are aware of an increasing number of cases of students with flu-like symptoms reporting to the nurse's office in our schools. District representatives have kept in contact with the Putnam County Department of Health and will continue to work closely with and take our direction from them on this matter.

Putnam County Department of Health urges you to consider vaccination for you and your child(ren), if you have not already done so. **Your pediatrician may still be offering flu vaccine. There will also be a Last Chance Flu Clinic on Tuesday, January 30, from 2 to 6:30 p.m., at the health department's main office at 1 Geneva Road in Brewster.** The fee is \$25 (cash or check only) or free for those with a Medicare card. In case of inclement weather, call the flu hot line at 845-808-1390 or visit the PCDOH's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/putnamhealth](http://www.facebook.com/putnamhealth) for notification of postponement.

In addition, Health Department officials recommend that parents and guardians take several steps. These include keeping your children home if they exhibit flu-like symptoms including fever 100 F or higher. Students should stay home for at least 24 hours after they are fever free or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

We urge you to remind your children about healthful habits. Recommendations include teaching your children:

- To wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds
- To cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- To dispose of used tissues properly and promptly after use.

The Putnam County Health Department provides a comprehensive web site on influenza at <http://www.putnamcountyny.com/health/>. For further information you can also refer to Centers for Disease Control web site at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/takingcare.htm/> and the New York State Department of Health at <http://www.health.ny.gov>. In addition, we have provided this information on our website at <http://www.carmelschools.com>

We take this matter seriously and are working with the Putnam County Department of Health to provide the best possible information to our families and staff members. Additionally, our Maintenance and Food Services Departments continue to use disinfectants in their cleaning solution and have stepped up the cleaning of our facilities. School nurses have tightened protocols and are diligently monitoring children and staff.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Cordially,

Andy Irvin  
Superintendent of Schools

*Cultivating Opportunities*





# PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# I N F L U E N Z A

## WHAT IS SEASONAL INFLUENZA (FLU)?

The flu is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. It infects the respiratory tract in humans (nose, throat, and lungs), and usually lasts 1-2 weeks. The flu is not the same as a cold or the “stomach flu.”

## HOW IS INFLUENZA SPREAD?

When someone who has the flu coughs, sneezes or talks, the virus is dispersed through the air and may be inhaled by anyone close by.

## FLU COMPLICATIONS:

Although most who get the flu will recover in less than 2 weeks, others will develop complications, which can be life-threatening, and may result in death:

- Pneumonia
- Bronchitis
- Sinus & ear infections
- Dehydration
- Worsened chronic pre-existing conditions (e.g. asthma attacks in someone who has asthma)

## SYMPTOMS:

- Fever\* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

\*Not always present with the flu

## HIGH RISK GROUPS:

Those at high risk for complications from the flu include:

- Children <5, but especially <2 years
- Adults over the age of 65
- Pregnant women
- People with chronic medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, diabetes, asthma, chronic lung disease, people who are morbidly obese)
- American Indians & Alaskan Natives

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS:

- **Everyone 6 months of age and older should get an annual flu shot.**
- Infants <6 months are the pediatric group at highest risk for complications, but are too young for the flu shot – all household members and caregivers should be vaccinated to protect them.
- Wash your hands often. Use soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you cannot wash your hands. This is the easiest way to stop the spread of germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Some germs can live for 2 hours or more on surfaces like door knobs, desks, and tables.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Cough or sneeze into the crease of your elbow, or into a tissue (and throw it away).
- Stay home when you feel sick, from work, stores, and public places. Keep sick kids home from school or daycare.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Practice good health habits, especially during flu season. Get plenty of sleep and exercise, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat healthy food.

For more information or to inquire about a flu shot, call your health care provider or the Putnam County Department of Health at (845) 808-1390