



June 22, 2009

IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT H1N1 INFLUENZA FOR SUMMER CAMP OPERATORS

Illness from H1N1 influenza continues to occur throughout New York City, with most people experiencing only mild illness. It is possible that campers and staff at your facility may become sick from the flu this summer. Your role in preventing the spread of influenza infection is very important. Summer Camp Operators should:

- Exclude all campers and staff with fever or flu-like illness (fever of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ AND cough or sore throat). Instruct parents to keep sick children at home.
- Reinforce the importance of covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands frequently.
- Report clusters of 5 or more individuals (campers or staff) individuals with flu-like illness (fever of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ AND cough or sore throat) while attending the camp in a single day. Call the Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation at 212.442.2626/30.

At this time, the primary means to reduce the spread of influenza in camps is to focus on early identification of ill campers and staff who should stay home when ill, and to encourage good cough and hand hygiene etiquette. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is asking you to reinforce your current policies regarding sick children and staff. DOHMH is also asking you to report clusters of flu-like illness in your camp. Below you will find guidance for addressing campers and staff with flu-like symptoms in your camp and protocols for reporting clusters of illness.

Since novel H1N1 influenza is a newly emerged virus, DOHMH continues to monitor H1N1 illness in the city and elsewhere. These recommendations are therefore subject to change as new information becomes available. Other public health agencies are similarly monitoring the situation and issuing interim guidance documents which are being updated and adapted to local circumstances. Some DOHMH recommendations differ from those provided by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/). Institutions should continue to check the DOHMH Novel H1N1 Influenza webpage at www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cd/cd-h1n1flu.shtml for updated local information and recommendations, fact sheets, and educational materials. H1N1 posters in many languages are available for download by clicking the link "[H1N1 \(SO\) Flu Information](#)" and scrolling down to the bottom of the page.

Additional resources on preventing the spread of flu in summer camp settings include:

- United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/camp
- NYS Department of Health:
www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/h1n1

Summer Camp Operator Guidance on Procedures for Suspected Clusters

Definition: A cluster of individuals is 5 or more individuals (campers or staff) with flu-like illness (fever of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ AND cough or sore throat) while attending the camp in a single day (not including children or staff who stayed home or were turned away at the beginning of the camp day).

Notification: If you identify a possible cluster (five or more campers or staff with flu-like illness) in your summer camp, notify the DOHMH Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation at 212.442.2626/30.

Follow-up: DOHMH will determine whether further investigation is needed or further actions by a camp operator are recommended after reviewing relevant information reported by the center as described below.

Infection Control Policy Recommendations and Reporting Procedures

Exclusion of Sick Children and Staff

- Remind parents not to send their children to camp if they are not feeling well.
- Ensure that policy and procedures for identifying and sending ill children and staff home are established and consistently implemented.
 - Campers and Staff with fever and cough or sore throat should stay home until 24 hours after symptoms resolve.
 - A health care provider note should NOT be required to return to camp.
 - Children with mild illness should NOT be sent the emergency room.
 - Advise parents to call their child's health care provider to determine if the child needs to be evaluated.
 - Turn away sick campers and staff who present at the beginning of the camp day with flu-like symptoms (Fever [Temperature greater than or equal to 100.4°F] and cough or sore throat).
 - Do not send away children unless their caretaker is available to take them home.
 - Campers and staff who develop fever and cough or sore throat during the day should be sent home.
 - Contact the parents of children who were asymptomatic when arriving at camp, but who develop flu-like symptoms during the day and ask that they be picked up and brought home as soon as possible.
 - Keep all individuals with fever and cough or sore throat away from the general population (try to maintain at least 3 feet of distance between the ill person and any other person) until their caretaker comes to pick them up.
 - Note the symptoms of all sick children before they are sent home. When possible take the temperature.
 - If at all possible, the camper should return home by taxi or private car and not on public transit.

Maintain Documentation of Sick Children and Staff

1. Create a listing of all children who are sent home with fever and respiratory illness with up to date contact information in case they need further follow up by DOHMH.
 - Please note – not all clusters will be further investigated by DOHMH.
2. Report clusters of 5 or more individuals (campers or staff) with flu-like illness (fever of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ and cough or sore throat) to the DOHMH Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation at 212.442.2626/30, Fax Number 212.442.2629.

Additional Items: all of the following should be in place:

1. Reinforce the importance of covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands frequently.
 - All bathrooms should be stocked with soap and paper towels and cleaned regularly.
 - Hand washing facilities including running water and soap should be readily accessible.
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used if hands are not visibly soiled.
 - Supervise young children when using these products.
 - Read all product labels and follow instructions carefully.
 - Camp staff should set a good example and practice frequent hand washing.
2. Custodial staff should disinfect bathrooms, cafeteria, common area door knobs and frequently touched surfaces on a regular basis. Refer to NYS DOH link on cleaning products at:
http://www.nyhealth.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/swine_flu/docs/disinfectant_products_by_product_name.pdf
3. Programs should maintain proper ventilation.

Exclusion and Return-to-Camp Guidance:

1. Ill campers and staff should remain out until at least 24 hours after resolution of their symptoms.
2. Campers and staff excluded under this protocol do not need a doctor's note to return to camp.