



February 28, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We have seen an increase in flu activity during the second half of February throughout Summit County, and we are seeing more Akron Public Schools students absent from school with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat). We are writing this letter to you to share some ways that you can help to prevent flu in your child and family, and also in the community.

Recommendations: Follow these simple steps to help keep your child from getting the flu, or passing it on to others:

- 1. If you or your child gets sick, make sure to see your healthcare provider as soon as possible.** Your provider may want to do additional testing or prescribe medication that could help you get better. **Make sure to stay home until at least 24 hours after the fever goes away.** If taking medicine such as Tylenol to control fever, you must wait until the fever is gone for 24 hours *without* using medicine before returning to school or work. Children with asthma should be sure to take their medications as prescribed and have an asthma control plan with their healthcare provider for use during infections and when asthma worsens.
- 2. Other ways to prevent the spread of influenza and other respiratory illness:**
 - Encourage sick family members to cover their nose and mouth when they cough and sneeze, using a tissue or bent arm. This helps keep germs from spreading to others.
 - Encourage family members to wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used.
 - Clean surfaces frequently such as desks, doorknobs, computer keyboards, faucet handles, and phones.
- 3. Since flu season continues through early May, it is still not too late to get a flu shot. Everyone over the age of 6 months should get the flu shot each year,** except in very rare cases. This includes children, parents, grandparents, and all other members of the family. There are many places offering the flu shot, including your primary care provider(s), Summit County Public Health, most pharmacies, and most health clinics.

If your child gets sick, remember to keep them home and notify your school nurse. This will help us to keep everyone as healthy as possible during this flu season. In addition, once your child is fever free, please **keep her or him home if he or she is not feeling well.** Our deans and teachers are understanding and will work with your child to make up any missed work/tests.

If you have any questions, please contact the Summit County Public Health Communicable Disease Unit at (330) 375-2662. For more information on flu, please visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website: www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm.