

## **Guidelines for Healthier Schools & Students**

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As many are aware, the cold and flu season is upon us. The following guidelines are being shared by *WLCSC Physician Dr. Ho* and the *WLCSC Nurses* to promote a healthier learning environment for our school age children.

Cold and Influenza (flu) are respiratory viruses. They are commonly characterized by a combination of cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, headache, fatigue, body aches, chills and fever.

### **To help keep our schools and students healthier:**

**Febrile Illness (a temperature of 100F or 38C or greater)** – Any child experiencing a fever with illness should stay home from school to rest and recover. Your child should be fever free (below 100F or 38C without the use of fever reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. Home rest and recovery allows the ill child to return healthier and ready to learn while not infecting other students and the staff.

**Influenza (flu) Vaccine** – It's not too late for your child to receive the flu vaccine. While this year's version is not as protective against the mutated strains we are seeing, it can still decrease the severity of the illness caused by the virus. It can also protect against other circulating strains of the virus, which is why the CDC still recommends getting the vaccine. Please contact your child's healthcare provider or if you need assistance, please contact your child's school nurse.

**Hand washing** – Hand washing is a very important component in the prevention of disease spread. Encourage your child to wash hands with soap and water often and especially before eating. If soap and water are not available, hand sanitizers are ok.

**When to Call the Doctor** - With a population of mostly healthy school age children and the common symptoms of the cold and flu (as listed above), the doctor should be called if a child has a high fever for several days or develops symptoms of labored or difficult breathing. If your child has underlying chronic health issues (such as asthma, diabetes, etc), please consult your physician as the benchmarks for seeking treatment may vary.

**School Absence Reporting:** Please remember to contact the school daily to report your child's illness and absence from school. WLCSC students are allowed nine parent approved absences for which a doctor's note is not required for the absence to be excused. For most, nine absences are sufficient, and the parent will not need to seek a doctor's excuse. Additionally, your child's school nurse is available as a daily resource to assess symptoms and assist with the decision as to whether your child needs to seek further care with a doctor visit.

***Your attention to and compliance with guidelines to promote healthier schools is appreciated.  
Thank you for allowing us to care for your children!***