

Mt. Tabor Children's Ministry Flu Information

9-11-09

The following information addresses what our program is doing to help keep children and staff from getting the flu. The back of this page covers what you can do if your child is not feeling well.

Steps Mt. Tabor Children's Ministry is Taking Now:

At this time, program staff and children who are NOT sick can safely come to church. I am monitoring the CDC website and will keep you updated with any important information regarding the current flu conditions.

We are encouraging our staff to get vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu (if recommended) when vaccines become available.

We encourage parents to have children vaccinated for the seasonal flu and H1N1 when the vaccines become available. Children under the age of 5 years old are at a higher risk for flu complications.

Our staff is encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze and are teaching the children how to do the same.

Our staff is practicing good hand hygiene and we are providing the time and supplies for the staff and children to wash their hands as often as necessary. Our staff is actively helping children wash their hands frequently.

If children or staff have flu-like symptoms, they are kept in a separate, but supervised space until they can go home. We are also limited the number of staff who take care of sick children.

We are asking parents to keep children home if they have COLD or FLU-like symptoms and we are asking staff to stay home if they have COLD or FLU-like symptoms. They should stay home until at least 24 hours after they are **FREE Of FEVER** (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 Celsius measured by mouth) **and free of signs of a fever** (chills, feeling very warm, a flushed appearance, or sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).

We are frequently cleaning surfaces and items that children touch with their hands, mouths, and body fluids such as toys, diaper stations, chairs, or playground equipment.

Thank you.

Judy Mahathey, Director of Children's Ministry

(OVER)

If your child is not feeling well ...

- **Watch carefully for signs and symptoms of flu.** Some children may not be able to tell you about their symptoms, which can delay your response to their illness. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.

A fever is a temperature measured by mouth with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius). If you are not able to measure a temperature, signs and symptoms that may indicate your child has a fever include chills, feeling very warm to the touch, having a flushed appearance, or sweating.

- **Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention.** These warning signs include one or more of the following:
 - fast breathing, trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or no longer breathing;
 - bluish, purplish, or gray skin color especially around the lips and the inside of the mouth, or around the nails;
 - not drinking enough fluids, refusing to drink;
 - not urinating, decreased number of wet diapers, or no tears when crying;
 - severe or persistent vomiting;
 - not waking up or not interacting (e.g., unusually quiet and inactive, no interest in playing, no interest in favorite toy);
 - being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, or cannot be consoled;
 - pain or pressure in the chest or stomach;
 - sudden dizziness;
 - confusion; and
 - flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.
- **Stay home if you or your child is sick with the flu** until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Children and teenagers should not be given aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid); this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
- **Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids** (such as water, broth, sports drinks) to prevent dehydration. For infants, use electrolyte beverages such as Pedialyte®.
- **Contact your doctor immediately if a child younger than 5 years of age is sick.** This is important because the antiviral medicines used to treat flu work best when started within the first 2 days of getting sick. Your doctor will tell you what special care is needed for your child.

To protect other family members ...

- **Make sure your child's hands are washed often, and especially after coughing or sneezing.** Help your younger child wash them for 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Have your child **cough and sneeze into a tissue** or into his or her elbow or shoulder if a tissue is not available. Make sure your child throws tissues away right after use.
- **Clean surfaces and objects that your child frequently touches** with his or her hands, mouth, or body fluids. Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant that is usually used, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
- **Keep your sick child in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for the sick child.
- **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu according to CDC recommendations when vaccines become available.

For more information about flu, call 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit www.flu.gov.