

## **West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Recommendations for Child-Care Facilities on Influenza and Influenza-like Illness.**

**A severe influenza season is anticipated this year. Influenza (“the flu”) is a sudden respiratory disease that spreads easily. It is characterized by the sudden onset of fever, body aches, sore throat, headache and cough, and, in children, can also cause diarrhea and vomiting.**

- Any staff or child suspected of having the flu should not attend daycare.
- Wash hands frequently using soap and warm water for 15-20 seconds (This is generally around the time it takes to sing the ABC's). Dry hands with paper towels/individual disposable towels, or automatic hand drying devices. Young children should be instructed and assisted to ensure proper hand washing. Restrooms should be checked regularly to ensure that soap and towels are available.
- Proper hand washing is particularly important after wiping the nose, or after contact with drool, saliva or nose drainage.
- Flu can be spread from coughs or sneezes. Make sure tissues are available for runny noses and sneezing. Staff and children should cover their mouths when coughing and use a tissue when sneezing or blowing their noses. Tissues should be thrown away immediately, and then hands should be washed. (If you cannot wash hands, rub hands with an alcohol hand gel). Make sure tissues are available in the daycare center and cars for runny noses and sneezing.
- Staff and children (especially those with medical conditions and children between six and 23 months of age) and anyone who wants to lower their risk of getting the flu should get the flu shot. It is never too late in the flu season to get the flu shot.
- Closing a daycare in the event of an outbreak is usually not recommended.
- All children and staff should avoid sharing of saliva by not sharing glasses, forks, spoons, toothbrushes, and toys.
- In the daycare, frequently clean commonly used surfaces, such as door handles, handrails, eating surfaces, toys, etc. Commercial disinfectants or bleach solutions should be used. (Mixing  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup bleach with one gallon of water makes bleach solution).

**Who should get the flu shot:** *(for more information contact your health care*

*provider or local health department)*

**Staff**

- Persons 50 years of age or older
- Women who will be in the second or third trimester of pregnancy during the influenza season

**Children**

- Children between six and 23 months of age
- Anyone older than six months of age with chronic heart or lung problems, including asthma
- Anyone older than six months of age who requires regular medical follow-up or was hospitalized during the preceding year because of diseases like diabetes, cancer, kidney problems, etc.
- Anyone between six months to 18 years of age receiving long-term aspirin therapy, because of the risk of developing Reye's syndrome after influenza

**Everyone**

- Household members (including children) of persons in high-risk groups

Modified from Iowa Department of Public Health, Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology