

FLU INFORMATION

This fall we not only have to plan for a new version of seasonal influenza, but in addition, another potentially serious strain, the 2009 H1N1 virus.

As the school year begins, we are all concerned about the spread of the H1N1 flu virus.

CDC estimates so far we've had more than 1 million cases of H1N1 in the United States. Similar to seasonal flu, with H1N1 you'll get a fever, cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, achiness, headache, chills and fatigue. Sometimes H1N1 causes diarrhea and vomiting. Just like seasonal flu, it can be severe and potentially deadly

"Unfortunately, the H1N1 (Swine Flu) virus did not take the summer off," said Dr. Joe Morton, State Superintendent of Education. "Its impact is still being felt around the world. As a result, we should continue to take preventative measures in both homes and schools to reduce the virus spreading in Alabama."

We encourage you to follow the preventative measures listed below:

- *Wash your hands often with soap and water. Waterless hand sanitizer works also.
- *Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hand.
- *Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes during your daily activities.
- *Keep your distance from anyone who is sick- 3 to 6 feet.

Based on current flu guidelines, sick students should stay home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever **without** the use of fever-reducing medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Fever of 100 degrees or greater will result in a student being sent home immediately. This CDC guideline is the same as the current fever protocol for Hoover schools.

Dr. Morton added, "We want children, parents and educators to continue to follow the common sense approach advised last school year: wash your hands often; avoid being near people who are ill; if you are sick, stay home from work or school; cover your cough with a tissue, and keep hands away from your face. These simple steps will lessen the potential impact of H1N1 in our state and help keep us all healthier."