



September 28, 2009

A package of information regarding Influenza A H1N1 (swine influenza) was sent home with students in early September 2009. This information is also posted on the Ministry of Health H1N1 school page at: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1/backtoschool/>.

In most children, the symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza. However, in some people, an H1N1 infection can be more serious. This includes:

- Children and adults with the following chronic health conditions:
 - cardiac or pulmonary disorders (including bronchopulmonary dysplasia, COPD, cystic fibrosis and asthma)
 - diabetes mellitus and other metabolic diseases
 - cancer, immunodeficiency, immunosuppression (due to underlying disease and/or therapy)
 - renal disease
 - anemia or hemoglobinopathy;
- Healthy children under the age of two;
- Healthy pregnant women.

The medication Tamiflu can decrease the risk of a serious illness for people in the above categories if the person starts taking it within 48 hours of developing influenza.

If your child is in any of the above categories, it is advisable for you to have a discussion with your physician about how Tamiflu could be started quickly in the event that your child develops influenza like illness in the coming months.

Please also note that children who have influenza like illness should not attend school until their symptoms and fever have fully resolved and they are well enough to fully participate in school activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard S. Stanwick", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Richard S. Stanwick, M.D., M.Sc., FRCPC, F.A.A.P.
Chief Medical Health Officer