



**Southwest Health District
Lee County Health Department**

**112 Park Street
Leesburg, Georgia 31763
(229) 759-3014 Fax (229) 759-3017 Emergency 888-430-4590**

March 14, 2017

Dear Parents and Caretakers:

With reported cases of flu in your child's school, it is important that we work together and take precautions to keep our children healthy. Respiratory infections spread more easily among children in schools. Families with school-age children tend to experience more infections.

By keeping our children flu-free, our whole community benefits. Additionally, healthy students miss fewer days of school, which results in less stress on the family. The following tips can help keep your family healthy:

- Students and parents, especially those with chronic medical conditions, should get an annual flu shot if they haven't already done so. It is not too late this flu season to get your child vaccinated. The benefit of a flu shot goes beyond the individual getting it. Once vaccinated, you are less likely to serve as a source of infection in your community.
- Keep children who are sick at home. Do not send them to school until they have been free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen for 24 consecutive hours.
- Students who may have the flu should not participate in sports, choir or other activities that involve close contact.
- Teach your child to practice good health habits – washing hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds and sneezing or coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces, toys and shared articles.
- If someone in your household gets the flu, a healthcare provider can prescribe a medication – called an antiviral – that may help shorten the length of the illness and the severity of the symptoms. The treatment, which is not a cure, must be started within the first 48 hours of flu onset.
- A provider may also prescribe an antiviral to family members to help prevent flu transmission to them if a household member is diagnosed with flu.

Often, we get confused about the symptoms of the flu and how they are different from a common cold. Common symptoms of flu include fever, headache, muscle and body aches, exhaustion, sore throat and dry cough. Children often have additional flu symptoms that are rare in adults, such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

**BAKER ~ CALHOUN ~ COLQUITT ~ DECATUR ~ DOUGHERTY ~ EARLY
GRADY ~ LEE ~ MILLER ~ MITCHELL ~ SEMINOLE ~ TERRELL ~ THOMAS ~ WORTH**



We Protect Lives.

Symptoms of a common cold include stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat and hacking cough.

Finally, avoid giving children aspirin and products that contain aspirin. Aspirin has been linked to a life-threatening liver condition known as Reyes Syndrome. Further, do not use children's over-the-counter multi-drug cold and flu medications, which have been shown to offer little relief and may cause significant side effects. For more information about seasonal flu, contact the Lee County Health Department at 229-759-3014 or go online to www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Ruis M.D." in a cursive style.

Charles Ruis, M.D.
District Health Director
Southwest Health District