

Swine Flu – Information for Childminders

Swine flu is a mild to moderate flu – similar to flu that goes around most winters, average duration – 7 days

It can be passed on by germs in the air or on surfaces.

On confirmed diagnosis, it should be notified as “Influenza-like illness” by a doctor to the HSE.

Treatment – as flu

Symptoms like flu – and may include any of the following :

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Bluish skin colour
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the person does not want to be held or touched
- Flu-like symptoms may improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

Now is the time to pay careful attention to your hygiene standards, your policy and procedures, particularly

- No spitting!
- Avoid close face-to-face contact
- Careful hand washing and drying with anti-bacterial liquid soap
- Providing tissues for coughs and sneezes
- Explain to children that they can minimise the spread of infection by turning their head away from others and sneezing into their tissues or their elbow, if a sudden sneeze happens – germs are less easily transmitted from soft surfaces than from hard surfaces
- Demonstrate how to use tissues to contain the germs released when coughing or sneezing and how to dispose of them carefully
- “Catch it!, Bin it! Kill it” followed by more hand-washing and drying
- Use a hands free pedal bin with a lid
- Wipe down common surfaces such as door handles, taps, at least twice daily
- Remove soft cuddly toys and disinfect plastic toys daily
- Print posters from the website below and display them
- If you have the flu or need to nurse somebody who is infected – wear a mask

Remind parents of your infectious illness exclusion policy and ask them to keep children at home if they or any of their family members show flu-like symptoms

If you feel unwell or have flu-like symptoms – don’t be heroic! Advise parents, and make your usual substitute arrangements or close for a week

Isolate any family member in your household who shows flu-like symptoms and advise parents of minded children of this situation

Isolate and provide agreed first aid to a child who shows symptoms, until parents collect the child (and any siblings) at first available opportunity and advise all parents that symptoms have occurred in your minded child/ren. Be watchful for symptoms in yourself or in other children or your family members

Further information is available on www.swineflu.ie

HSE information number 1850 24 1850