

## Information for Parents and Caregivers

### What is Influenza?

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is a virus that typically causes infections in the winter months. Since the onset of COVID-19, there have been an increase of flu cases in the fall.

### Symptoms of Influenza

- abrupt onset of fever with cough
- muscle aches
- headache
- tiredness/fatigue
- sore throat
- congestion
- runny nose

### Is Influenza Contagious? What is its Duration?

Influenza is contagious 24 hours before symptoms start and peaks within the first 3 days of symptoms. The duration of influenza is 3-7 days.

### Treatment & Symptom Management

There are several antiviral medications that can be taken for treatment, if started within the first 48 hours of symptom onset and for prevention in close, high risk contacts. Symptoms can be managed with acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever.

### Prevention

The best prevention for influenza is receiving an annual flu vaccine!

### When Can a Sick Child Return to Day Care, School, and other Social Settings?

A sick child should be excluded from social settings until they are fever free for 24 hours and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.



ALABAMA REGIONAL CENTER FOR INFECTION PREVENTION  
AND CONTROL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Alabama Department of Health, Communicable Disease Chart for Alabama's Schools and Childcare Facilities,  
<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/assets/countyschoolsinfection2pg.11.17.15.pdf>

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