



Wholly Healthy



VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2009

Health Office

Sybil Estes BSN, RN
Phone
(617) 969-2260
Ext. 47

Email:
SEstes
@mountalverniahhs.org

Wellness Council

The Wellness Council promotes a healthy lifestyle by:

- Coordinating presentations on topics such as self-defense, drugs and alcohol, suicide prevention, risky behaviors.
- Monthly displays and posters on pertinent topics.
- Increasing knowledge, skills and decision making on key teen issues.

October is.....

NUTRITION
AWARENESS
MONTH
At
M.A.H.S.

Welcome back!

Welcome back to a new school year at Mt. Alvernia High School. We all want your daughter to have a successful year in every area: academics, spiritual growth, personal growth and health.

As your school nurse I maintain all health records in compliance with state and federal regulations and work with our Wellness Council to promote a healthy lifestyle for all students.

In this newsletter I will share current trends in school health and topics to fuel family discussion at home. Please share this information with your family as we strive together to ensure that we are all *Wholly Healthy*.

September was **National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month**. In recognition of this, the students were presented with facts and statistics on ovarian cancer.

- 21,500 women are diagnosed yearly
- 15,500 women will die each year
- Detected in its earliest stage, the 5 yr survival rate is >93%.
- Early symptoms are subtle and easily confused with other ailments.
- Can strike a woman at any time, increases after age 45.

Symptoms are: bloating, pelvic/abdominal pain, difficulty eating, feeling full and frequent urination.

Girls were given teal sweat bands to help increase the awareness of ovarian cancer.

FLU...what you can do

At Back to School Night each student was given an informative booklet on the prevention, symptoms and treatment of the **flu**.

What is the flu?

The seasonal flu is caused by influenza viruses that infect people every year. In New England, flu season is usually December thru April.

What are common flu symptoms?

- Sudden onset of fever
- Fatigue or weakness
- Body aches
- Dry cough/ sore throat

How is it spread?

The flu spreads through droplets from the nose, mouth and throat...from sneezing, coughing or touching a contaminated surface and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

Prevention:

- Get the flu vaccine: you can **not** get the flu from the vaccine. It's been available since August and you can receive it into the spring.
- Cover when coughing/sneezing
- Wash your hands frequently
- Limit contact with others if sick
- Clean surfaces at home with household cleaners like Lysol.
- **Stay home if you have a flu-like illness until you are fever-free for 24 hrs. after your last dose of fever-reducing meds like Tylenol or Motrin.** Fever is 100.4 & greater.

H1N1 Flu: Your Questions Answered

What is H1N1 flu? It is a disease of the breathing system, including the nose, throat and lungs. Flu is short for influenza and is caused by a virus. H1N1 is a new virus that was first recognized in April of 2009 in Mexico. It spread quickly to many parts of the world and is now a “pandemic” or global outbreak. It is not the same as “seasonal” flu which occurs every year during the winter and early spring, but it causes similar symptoms, is spread the same way and can be prevented like seasonal flu.

What are the symptoms of both influenzas? Fever, cough, and sore throat : the most common, but can include body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, vomiting and diarrhea.

How is H1N1 flu spread? The same way the seasonal flu is spread. Flu symptoms start 1-4 days (usually 2) after a person breathes in the virus.

Will the seasonal flu vaccine also protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu?

No, it is not expected to protect against the H1N1 flu because they are different viruses.

Who should get the H1N1 vaccine? Five groups have been identified by the CDC to get this vaccine when it becomes available. * pregnant women, *people who live with or care for infants under 6 mos. of age, *health care personnel, *people age 6mos.-24yrs, *and people age 25-64 yrs who have certain pre-existing medical conditions.

Are there people who should not get the vaccine? Yes, people who have a fever at the time, people with certain allergies such as eggs and certain medical conditions.

How well do flu vaccines work? According to the CDC, how well the flu vaccine works depends on how close the match is between the flu vaccine and the types of flu viruses that are circulating in the community. Every year, scientists try to predict what types of flu viruses are most likely to cause illness each year so that these strains can be included in the vaccine. In years when the vaccine and virus strains are well matched, the vaccine can reduce the chances of getting the flu by 70-90% in healthy adults.

Can pregnant women get flu vaccine during their pregnancy? Yes, it is safe to give both vaccines to pregnant women anytime during pregnancy.

H1N1 versus SEASONAL FLU

How are they different?

- Seasonal flu is caused by different flu viruses than H1N1 flu.
- Seasonal flu occurs every year, most often during winter and early spring.
- Because H1N1 is a new virus, our bodies have not built up any resistance to it, which is why so many people may get sick.
- Pandemic flu, like H1N1 flu, occurs once every 30 yrs or so.
- Seasonal flu most severely affects people 65 yrs. or older.
- H1N1 is currently being seen more often in children and young adults between the ages of 5 and 24 yrs. old.
- A vaccine is available every year to help prevent seasonal flu.
- H1N1 vaccine is expected to be available in November 2009.