

## MEMORANDUM

TO: YMCA Members, Childcare Parents, and Staff Members  
FROM: Troy Curtis, Executive Director  
RE: H1N1 Virus (Swine Flu) and other Contagious Illnesses  
DATE: September 1, 2009

With flu season fast approaching and the recent media coverage of the H1N1 virus, I felt that it was appropriate to share the YMCA policy regarding this particular illness and other public health related topics. After gathering the most recent information from the State of Maine's Center for Disease Control (CDC), we have formulated some very basic recommendations for our members and child care parents. The Penobscot Bay YMCA services large amounts of people each day within our facility; therefore it will be very important that each YMCA participant follow these guidelines for everyone's wellbeing. Our goal is to decrease the risk of transmitting illnesses while here at the YMCA. The adherence to the following policies, coupled with the stepped up precautions that staff are taking will help create a healthier environment for all.

### **Immunization**

Individuals and parents should strongly consider immunization for illnesses such as the seasonal flu and for the H1N1 virus. This is especially important if you or your child is part of a "high risk" population. For more information please contact your primary care physician or visit [www.cdc/vaccines/rec/default.htm](http://www.cdc/vaccines/rec/default.htm)

### **Child Care**

It is imperative that parents monitor the health of their children as well as themselves. Should someone within the family become ill with flu-like symptoms, please do the following three things: 1. Stay home and keep the illness contained. Those with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs. 2. Contact your doctor 3. Inform the YMCA if you are diagnosed with H1N1 or some other contagious illness, as we will need to respond by monitoring other children within our child care center. Symptoms for the H1N1 virus include: fever, muscle pain, cough, respiratory difficulty and a runny nose.

It is important to note that Child Care and Maintenance staff are vigilantly cleaning toys, mats, cribs, cots, doorknobs, and all other surfaces that people are in contact with. The YMCA child care staff will also increase the frequency of participant hand washing. Parents are requested to assist us with this process by washing children's hands upon entering the classroom at drop off.

### **General Members**

First and foremost, stay home if you are not feeling completely healthy. Those with flu-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. You should also stay home even if you are using antiviral drugs. Sanitize your hands before and after working out on fitness equipment. When you are finished with a piece of equipment, spray it with the disinfectant solution (available in the plastic bottles) and wipe it down. Spray exercise mats as well and consider bringing your own to class.

## **YMCA Staff**

The YMCA will make every effort to provide free vaccinations for both the seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus during the fall of 2009 for staff members. We will also require that sick staff remain home until they are 24 hours removed from illness and fever. If staff members have children or other family members that are ill, we will make accommodations to insure that staff has the ability to care for their ill family members. If all available vacation and personal time off (VPTO) has expired the YMCA will work with staff on a case by case basis to insure that YMCA staff has the ability to care for themselves and family members appropriately.

## **Additional ways to protect yourself:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm.
- Wash your hands often, using soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, the CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

## **YMCA Pandemic Action Plan**

1. If a case of H1N1 is discovered within our community or facility it will be the intent of the YMCA to remain open if at all possible.
2. Sick individuals within the YMCA will be isolated and sent home as soon as possible.
3. The YMCA will work closely with the Maine CDC to formulate additional action steps if necessary.
4. If the YMCA is closed for a health related situation, we will use the standard “weather related” closing procedures to inform members.
5. Ongoing information for members and participants would be available at [www.penbayymca.org](http://www.penbayymca.org).

The YMCA staff will continue to maintain an upgraded hygiene protocol, and if an outbreak of H1N1 flu or some other health related illness should occur at our YMCA or in our community, we will work closely with state and local officials to handle the situation in the most prudent, professional way possible. For more information about the H1N1 virus please visit [www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/individual/checklist.html](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/individual/checklist.html).

*These policies are subject to change based on conditions that may arise in the future.*