



PIMA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION, SUITE 1340
3950 S. COUNTRY CLUB RD, SUITE 100 • TUCSON, AZ 85714-2056
(520) 243-7797 FAX (520) 791-0366

February 19, 2008

Dear Principal or Director:

The Pima County Health Department is requesting your help in lessening the community wide effects of the current influenza outbreak in our county. Over the past week we have received numerous reports from schools about increased cases of flu. In addition, all of our hospitals are reporting critical overcrowding in emergency rooms. There are several steps you can take to assist with this effort. These are listed below:

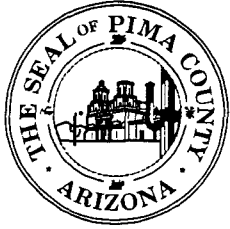
1. Distribute the attached parent letter to all parents today, February 19, 2008 or as soon as possible.
2. Request staff with respiratory illness to stay home for the duration of their symptoms.
3. Simplify excused absence procedures for the remainder of February, 2008. For example, do not request that staff and students return to school with physician note. It is very difficult to get a Dr. appointment right now, and it is unlikely your staff and students will be able to get such notes without further clogging the already overburdened local health care system.
4. Assure personal hygiene messages and supplies are available. For example: hand washing and cover your cough posters, soap and paper towels available at all sinks, other supplies as available.

We thank you for your assistance with this important public health campaign.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Michelle McDonald, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Pima County Health Department



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Dear Parents:

Flu and colds are hitting Pima County hard right now. The Pima County Health Department has received many reports during the past week stating that large numbers of students and staff are sick. The Health Department is also receiving reports that our local hospitals are facing serious overcrowding in their emergency rooms.

You can help reduce the problems of increased absenteeism and hospital overcrowding by following these recommendations:

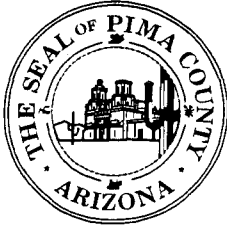
1. Keep your children home from school if they are ill.
2. If you think your child may have the flu, contact your health care provider. If you cannot get in to see your own doctor, go to an urgent care center or call a community health center for a same day appointment.
3. Take your child to an emergency room only for severe symptoms such as shortness of breath or chest pain (or other non-flu emergencies).
4. If you are sick, stay home and away from crowds.

Thank you for your help with these recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle McDonald, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Pima County Health Department



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19 de febrero 2008

Estimados Padres:

Estamos experimentando una gran incidencia de resfriados y de la influenza (la gripe). El Departamento de Salud del Condado de Pima ha recibido muchos reportes durante esta semana pasada que una gran cantidad de estudiantes y personal están enfermos. El Departamento de Salud también ha recibido reportes sobre el gran número de personas que están presentándose a los salones de emergencia de los hospitales locales.

Todos ustedes pueden ayudar a reducir el problema de las ausencias y el sobrecargo para los hospitales si siguen las siguientes recomendaciones:

1. No manden a sus hijos a la escuela si están enfermos.
2. Si ustedes creen que su hijo/hija tiene la influenza (la gripe), favor de comunicarse con su proveedor de salud. Si no puede ver a su doctor, pueden presentarse en uno de los centros de cuidado de urgencia o pueden llamar a unos de los centros de salud de la comunidad para una cita durante ese mismo día.
3. Lleve a su hijo/hija a emergencia, **SOLAMENTE**, si tiene síntomas muy severas como falta de respiración, dolores de pecho, u otras emergencias que no estén relacionadas a la influenza (la gripe).
4. **Si USTEDES están enfermos, QUÉDENSE EN SU CASA, lejos de grupos de gente.**

Gracias por su cooperación.

Michelle McDonald, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
El Departamento de Salud del Condado Pima