

15% Absenteeism – Considerations for Increased Illness in Schools

With increased absenteeism related to illnesses, some strategies your school may consider are outlined below. If you have questions or concerns call your School Nurse Regional Liaison.

Risk assessment to consider:

1. Absenteeism numbers for your school/district
2. Percent of vaccinated student and staff
3. Outbreak determination by CDC
4. [How CDC Classifies Flu Severity](#)

If positive Covid-19 cases, also monitor:

1. [Vaccination Rates by County](#)
2. Positive COVID cases in your school
3. [CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker](#)
4. [Wastewater testing in Maine](#)



Everyday practice

- *Promote good hand hygiene
- *Education on cough etiquette
- *Promote regular cleaning of high traffic areas
- *Continue to promote vaccinations for students /staff
- *Consider vaccination clinic
- *Encourage stay home when sick
- *Optimize ventilation



Increased absenteeism, but less than 15%

In addition to strategies on green list, consider:

- *Encouraging home [TESTING](#) to rule out [Covid-19](#)
- * More frequent cleaning of classrooms, locker areas and other high traffic areas
- * Meeting of Nurse, Admin. and School Physician to discuss increased absenteeism from illness and determine implementation of new mitigation strategies
- * Informing parents of rising numbers, asking to monitor symptoms, stay home if sick and inform school of symptoms
- *Contacting parents of students who have high risk medical conditions



Absenteeism 15% or above

In addition to strategies on green & yellow list, consider:

- *Encouraging masking while indoors if respiratory illnesses
- *Increasing outdoor air intake
- *Notifying parents again of increased illnesses
- *Continuing to monitor spread

- * [Report in NEO](#) for absenteeism 15% or above or call 1-800-821-5821

Guidance for School Nurses

Prioritization during illness spikes

Continue Regular School Nursing Duties



- Delay or pause screenings
- Share non-nursing duties with someone else (ordering supplies, testing, etc.)
- Pause/delay non-essential classroom education (puberty, dental)



- Continue to delay items from yellow list
- Continue using the current IHP's (if there are no major changes) until time permits to update them
- Review records and immunization status of students only if time permits
- Consider attending IEP and 504 meetings through video conferencing or send a report to the team