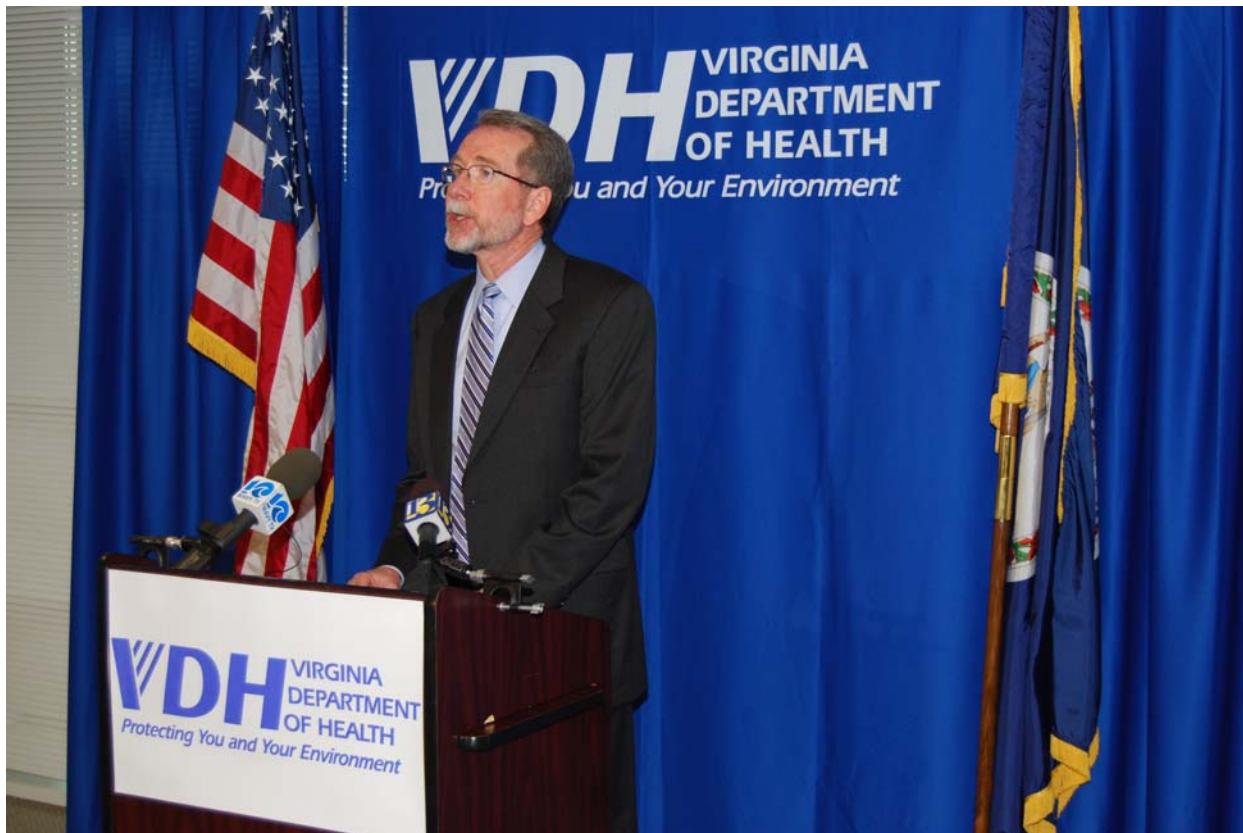


Press Briefing 5-4-2009



Good morning. I am Dr. David Trump, the acting health director for the Norfolk Department of Public Health.

We were informed yesterday that a child who lives in Norfolk has been officially classified as a probable case of the new H1N1 influenza ("swine flu"). The child did not require hospitalization and is recovering well. The child was exposed to a relative during a trip to the southwestern United States. Since family members had a similar exposure during their travel, the child and the family cooperated to minimize potential spread of the infection by remaining in voluntary isolation at home. No other family members have become ill.

The child is a student at the East Beach Montessori School and had been in school at a time during the illness when the infection could have been transmitted to others. At this time, we are not aware of other students with influenza-like illness at the school. Because this is a preschool whose students include children under the age of 5, we have taken public health measures based on the child being classified as a probable case.

**Our recommendations are based on current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and were made in very close consultation with the State Health Commissioner and other senior leadership of the Virginia Department of Health.**

**The preschool will be closed for at least this week.** The closure may be longer if other children become sick. The reason for closing a preschool during this H1N1 influenza outbreak is to try to reduce the spread of the virus in the community.

In addition, it was important for parents of students to know that an exposure to H1N1 influenza may have occurred. Children less than 5 years old are very susceptible to getting flu. Children less than 5 years old or any child with a chronic medical condition also are more likely to have an illness that requires hospitalization.

Last evening, the pre-school director notified parents of the closure and of the health department recommendations. Today staff of the Norfolk Department of Public Health will be helping parents and their child's doctor, understand the situation and our recommendations.

Our recommendations to parents of children at the East Beach Montessori School include:

If your child is ill, you need to call your doctor. Tell them that your child was in contact with a child with probable H1N1 flu. Your child may need antiviral medications for treatment.

If your child is well but is less than 5 years old or has a chronic medical condition, you still need to call your doctor. Tell them that your child was in contact with a child with probable H1N1 flu. Your child may need antiviral medications as a preventive measure.

We provided parents with information to give to their child's doctor that explain the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for children exposed to a probable or confirmed case of H1N1 flu.

We could not have gotten this information to parents so quickly without the full cooperation and hard work of the director of the East Beach Montessori School. She has done a great job communicating with us and the parents of her students.

Finally, I will repeat the basic steps that everyone can take to protect themselves, their families and their neighbors.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. 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.
  - Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.

Anyone in the community who has questions about H1N1 influenza can get answers to their questions by calling the Virginia Department of Health information line at (877) ASK-VDH3. The hotline will be open daily this week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If you have additional questions,

you may call the health department at (757) 683-2796.