STEVEN M. NEUHAUS
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DR. IRINA GELMAN, DPM, MPH, PhDc
COMMISSIONER

COUNTY OF ORANGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

July 30, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Orange County Department of Health and the Orange County Medical Society want you to be aware that Influenza (also known as "flu") season is on its way. The flu is a serious contagious respiratory illness that can be mild to severe and can sometimes lead to death. Flu symptoms include fever/chills, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, muscle/body aches, headache, tiredness, and vomiting/diarrhea.

We strongly encourage you and your family to get vaccinated before flu begins spreading in our communities, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that has infected millions of people in the United States and caused over 150,000 deaths nationwide. Everyone six months of age and older without contraindications is recommended to receive seasonal flu vaccine. Young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions, and people 65 years of age and older are at an increased risk for flu complications.

To stay healthy during this flu season, we encourage the following:

- Speak with your physician or health care provider to ensure that you and your child are up-to-date with all recommended vaccinations, including flu vaccine.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Beware of methanol-containing hand sanitizers that have been recalled by the FDA. https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-updates-hand-sanitizers-methanol#products
- Maintain social distancing by staying at least 6 feet from other people and wear a mask covering your nose and mouth when unable to maintain social distancing. Face coverings should **not** be worn by:
  - Children younger than 2 years old.
  - Anyone who has trouble breathing.
  - Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- If you and/or your child are sick, stay home. Follow your school/work sick policy and seek medical advice.
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.

This year more than ever before, it is instrumental to speak with your doctor about flu vaccination for you and your family. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and our schools healthy. If you have any questions, please contact Orange County Department of Health at 845-291-2330.

Sincerely,

Dr. Irina Gelman, DPM, MPH, PhDc
Commissioner of Health

Mark Stamm, MD
President, Orange County Medical Society