



Guide to Controlling Respiratory Illnesses For Students Living Off-Campus and Attending Institutes of Higher Learning

1. **Stay home when sick.** If you have respiratory symptoms (sore throat, cough, etc.) and a fever (greater than 100° F or 37.8° C) stay home at least until your fever has been gone for 24 hours. The fever must go away without taking a fever-reducing medication like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®). Stay isolated in a room during this time, at least 6 feet away from others. No visitors or group gatherings.

- Get plenty of rest and drink plenty of non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic fluids, such as water or Gatorade®. Use over-the-counter medicines to treat symptoms such as fever, pain, or cough.
- It is very important to follow the prevention items listed in #3 below.
- If your symptoms do not improve, or if you fit into one of the categories in the box to the right, contact your healthcare provider. If you do not have a healthcare provider, call your school's medical clinic or an urgent care center.

2. **Monitor other persons in your household for new onsets of illness.** Follow the directions above in #1. Remember to keep sick persons separated from others by at least 6 feet.

3. **Remember to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses by doing the following:**

- i. Wash your hands: Cleaning your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand gel often is the single most important action to prevent the spread of illness.
For educational materials, visit <http://ads.health.ok.gov>.
 - Wash hands with soap and water when hands are visibly soiled.
 - When hands are not visibly soiled, either soap and water or alcohol-based hand products such as gels are effective.
- ii. Avoid contaminating yourself with your hands: Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth unless you have just cleaned them and have not touched anything else.
- iii. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze: This is important whether or not you are ill, since germs may be present even when there are no symptoms.
 - Use a tissue to cover the nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing, then dispose of it immediately and perform hand hygiene.
 - Another safe way to cover your cough or sneeze is to cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve, using the inside of your elbow. Germs are much less likely to be spread from your clothes than from your hands. When you cough or sneeze into your hands, you will spread germs every time you touch something.

Persons at Higher Risk for Complications:

- Children aged less than 5 years
- Adults aged over 65 years
- Persons aged under 19 years receiving long term aspirin therapy
- Pregnant and postpartum (less than 2 weeks after) women
- Persons with asthma, chronic lung, heart, liver, kidney, blood, neurologic, neurodevelopment, endocrine, or metabolic disorders
- Persons with weakened immune systems due to medication or disease
- Persons who are morbidly obese (BMI over 40)
- American Indians/Alaska Natives
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities

Thank you for your part in controlling the spread of disease in Oklahoma.