

**For Immediate Release:**

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**More Cases Confirm Novel H1N1 Flu is Spreading in Vermont**

BURLINGTON – Seventeen more cases of novel H1N1 flu have been laboratory-confirmed in the past several days including students at several more elementary and high schools.

To date, the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory has analyzed more than 450 clinical samples. A total of 31 Vermont residents have tested positive for novel H1N1 influenza A virus. No one has been hospitalized, and all have recovered or are recovering at home.

“This new flu is clearly in our communities now, and there is no longer any need for most people to get tested to find out if they have it. It’s here, and if you have the flu at this time of year, you almost certainly have the novel H1N1 flu,” said Health Commissioner Wendy Davis, MD.

Health officials are now asking health care providers to only test and treat people who are hospitalized or very ill with influenza-like symptoms and at risk for serious complications — or people who are ill and spend time in high-risk group settings like long-term care facilities.

“We’re asking everyone else to stay home from work, school and other group settings and away from others if you are sick. And we’re asking employers to support this advice to help keep illness from spreading,” said Dr. Davis. “Fortunately this flu has been mild for most people, but as with the influenza we see each winter, it could cause life-threatening complications for the very young, the very old, people with serious chronic health conditions, people with compromised immune systems, or women who are pregnant.”

Cases have been confirmed in seven counties: Bennington, Chittenden, Franklin, Rutland, Grand Isle, Orleans, and Windsor.

Cases have been confirmed at the University of Vermont and eight other schools: Allen Brook Primary School, Champlain Valley Union High School, Hunt Middle School, Missisquoi Valley Union School, Rutland Area Christian School, Rutland High School, Springfield High School and Williston Central School.

Allen Brook School in Williston decided yesterday to close its Kindergarten a few days early after several cases were confirmed in that class, and with others out sick.

“Most people who are sick with flu will not need to see a health care provider and can be cared for at home,” said Dr. Davis. “Flu spreads easily from person to person. We continue to ask Vermonters to take simple, everyday precautions: cover your cough every time, wash your hands

often and well, check yourself for flu symptoms, and stay home and away from others if you're sick. Help children learn these lessons well.”

Extensive information, tools and resources about H1N1 flu, healthy habits, and pandemic preparedness are available at the Health Department's website: [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov) or dial 2-1-1 for information in any language.

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