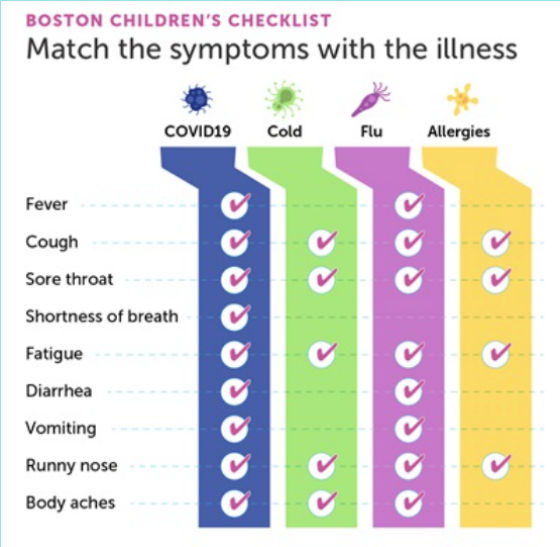
HW HEALTH OFFICE UPDATES

January 20, 2021

COVID-19 VS COLD VS FLU VS ALLERGIES



Source: Boston Children's Hospital

This image demonstrates that COVID-19 has a lot of common symptoms with other illnesses. A person may have one or more mild symptoms or be asymptomatic. For any symptoms the recommendation is to seek a COVID-19 test.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

We are currently in Phase One of Massachusett's COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Recently several of our HW school nurses volunteered as vaccinators for first responders and also received the COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is a 2 part series with the second vaccine occurring in a few weeks. We are excited and hopeful to be part of the vaccination process, and look forward to moving through the phases. School staff will be vaccinated in Phase Two.

TRAVEL ORDER FAQ

Does the travel order allow me to travel to another state for a day trip for a leisure activity such as skiing or shopping? Do I only need to comply if I stay overnight?

No. The travel order requirements still applies for day trips and leisure activities.

Travel for short, same-day trips are only exempt "for purposes that the Commissioner has designated as Critical Life Activities." This is "limited to short, same-day trips across the border and back for the following purposes: grocery shopping, visits to pharmacies, attending appointments with licensed health care providers including medical, dental, or mental health, visiting persons receiving treatment in hospitals or residing in congregate care settings, attendance at day care or children's camps, attending religious services and funerals or memorial services, or attending to the care needs of family members."

COVID-19 HAMILTON & WENHAM TESTING

The towns of Hamilton and Wenham are providing testing to town residents and school employees on Wednesdays and Saturdays in January at the MRMS. Refer to the Hamilton or Wenham town websites for the latest information. Both towns are providing tests only to those who have COVID-19 symptoms and/or those who have been in close contact with a COVID positive person. For residents that would like to be tested for travel purposes or for peace of mind, Beauport is offering $85 PCR testing on site as well. Participants are asked to preregister by 4 pm on the previous day.

INFLUENZA

Announced on January 15, 2021: "The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is removing the requirement for flu vaccination for attendance in childcare/preschool, primary, secondary and postsecondary education. Preliminary data show that this has been a mild flu season to date, presumably as people have received their seasonal flu vaccine and have been adhering to mask-wearing and social distancing due to COVID-19. Given the intensive Commonwealth-wide efforts regarding COVID-19 vaccination, DPH wants to alleviate the burden to obtain flu vaccination and focus on continuing our COVID -19 vaccination efforts. DPH continues to strongly recommend that everyone age six months and older receive their seasonal flu vaccine each year."

For more school health and COVID information please visit our HW nurses' website.