



Dear Parent or Guardian:

School Health Services is proud to be a part of the team effort that supports student success in our county. Please utilize the following information to ensure that your child has a safe and healthy 2022/2023 school year.

Parents should have already received an email from School Care (formally Caretox) regarding updating the student health profile. School Care is the Electronic Health Record system that Watauga County uses to stay up-to-date on student health information. If you have not received this email, please check your spam folder and/or make sure your email address is correctly listed in PowerSchool which will automatically update it in School Care. The information gathered is utilized by the school nurse to identify any health care needs or concerns that you may have regarding your child. This information may include but is not limited to chronic health conditions, allergies, or other pertinent health matters.

We want you to be aware of Watauga County Schools' policy on medication administration. If your child should require any medications during the school day, you along with your health care provider must complete a medication authorization form. This form can be found on your school's web site, School Care or by visiting your child's school. The policy regarding medication administration can be accessed by visiting your school's web site at: [WCS Medication Policy](#) or a written copy will be provided upon request. Information on Watauga County Schools' health policies can be found on each school's webpage.

To maintain a healthy school environment please use these guidelines on when to keep your student at home.

**COVID Signs/Symptoms and Requirements:** Stay home if symptomatic and call your school nurse for additional guidance. COVID symptoms include **fever (100.4 degrees or higher), sore throat, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, cough, diarrhea, vomiting, new onset of severe headache especially with fever.** This guidance should be followed even if fully vaccinated or up to date on vaccines, has had COVID within the last 90 days, and/or tested positive for antibodies due to COVID variants. Negative COVID test results will be required to return back to school.

**Non-COVID:**

**Fever >100.4 F:** Should stay home until there is NO FEVER for 24 hours WITHOUT MEDICATION.

**Diarrhea & Vomiting:** Should stay home with one event of watery diarrhea or vomiting.

**Persistent Coughing:** Should stay home if cough is worse than you would expect with a cold.

**Sore Throat:** Should stay home if sore throat with fever or severe sore throat without fever.

**Pinkeye:** Should stay home if the eye is red with cloudy or yellow drainage.

**Persistent Ear Pain:** Should stay home if severe or recurrent ear pain.

**Chickenpox:** Should stay home until all bumps are scabbed and no new bumps have shown up in 2

days. **Impetigo:** Should stay home if red, oozing blisters with yellow scabs on body or face.

**Scabies:** Should stay home with scabies itching and rash for 24 hours after treatment begins. **Head Lice:** Should stay home until the removal of all live lice using a lice killing product or procedure, as well as eggs (nits) and egg cases within ½ inch from scalp.

Respectfully,  
School Health Team



## SCHOOL HEALTH NEWS

### BACK TO SCHOOL: Important Information to Keep Students Healthy and Safe

#### **INFLUENZA (The Flu)**

Influenza (the Flu) is a viral infection that can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and to life-threatening complications. Symptoms of the flu include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, muscle aches, dry cough, sore throat and runny, stuffy nose. Children sometimes also have nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Flu is spread through respiratory droplets from a cough or sneeze, or from droplets on unwashed hands. Vaccine against Flu is available every year beginning in October through your private physician and at the Watauga County Health Department. The vaccine is recommended for people at high risk for complications of the flu, (the elderly and those with chronic illnesses, including asthma) and people in close contact with them (this includes household contacts). When vaccine supplies are in good supply flu shots are also available for children and adults in the general public.

#### **MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS (Garret's Law)**

Meningitis is an infection of the fluids and covering of the brain or spinal cord that can be caused by bacteria. While viral meningitis is fairly common, and people usually recover fully, bacterial meningitis is very rare, but much more serious. Meningitis is spread by close exchange of saliva and respiratory secretions through sharing of drinking glasses, cigarettes or kissing. Symptoms of bacterial meningitis include severe headache, high fever, nausea/vomiting and stiff neck. Symptoms can worsen very quickly. Children with any of these symptoms should be checked by a doctor right away. A vaccine against bacterial meningitis is available through your private physician and the Watauga County Health Department, and is recommended for children in their early teens.

**Community Acquired (CA-MRSA): METHICILLIN RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREA** CA-MRSA Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus is an infection, caused by skin bacteria, that usually starts as a pimple or boils on the skin, and is very hard to clear up without very special antibiotics. CA-MRSA has become a growing problem among athletes who are involved in contact sports, (football, wrestling), and those using athletic equipment that is shared. Important tips about CA-MRSA for athletes and all those who use athletic equipment such as mats and weight rooms include: **Everyone** should wash hands frequently with soap and water. **All athletes** should shower thoroughly with soap immediately after work-out or practice. **Athletes should** wash all athletic clothing and towels after each use. **Do not share personal items. Carefully self check** all skin daily for rashes, pimples or boils that get worse instead of better. Always report rashes, open sores, pimples, and boils to the team trainer or the school nurse. If sores get worse, even after repeated washing with soap and water, the student should be checked by a doctor or health care provider. Avoid body contact with others or with shared equipment if rash or pustules are present. All skin sores should be covered with an adhesive bandage and clothing for athletics. Do not participate in contact sports until released by a doctor.

#### **Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)**

HPV is a common virus that is spread from one person to another by close intimate contact. There are about 40 types of HPV that can infect both men and women, and can raise the risk of cervical cancer in women. The virus lives in the body and usually causes no symptoms, but some people may develop a visible growth or bump. Most people with HPV do not know they are infected which is why males and females can pass it on without realizing it. A new vaccine can now protect females (ages 9-26) from four major types of HPV. For more information about HPV vaccine, check with your private physician or the local Health Department.

**More information is available at: Watauga Co. Health Dept.: [www.ADHA.org](http://www.ADHA.org),  
NC DHHS: [www.immunizenc.org](http://www.immunizenc.org), WCS: [www.wataugaschools.org](http://www.wataugaschools.org)**