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## Crist gives swine flu tips

### Governor meets with kids at Gateway Elementary

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Lee County public school personnel plan to encourage the tried-and-true precautions when classes resume to keep swine flu in check.

One preventive measure is as simple as covering one's mouth properly when coughing or sneezing.

"I tell students if someone sees your face, then you're not doing it right," said Kathleen Rose, a school nurse for 26 years who's now at Gateway Elementary School and president of the Florida Association of School Nurses.

"Let the germs be here (pointing to her shoulder) and not here (pointing to her hand.)"

Gov. Charlie Crist brought a similar message when he spoke at Gateway Elementary on Friday afternoon.

Crist was joined by Florida Education Commissioner Eric Smith and Florida Surgeon General Ana Viamonte Ros at his Southwest Florida appearance.

"We need to put out enough awareness and reduce the influence of swine flu as much as possible," Crist said.

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Gov. Charlie Crist greets Bonita Middle School student Jeremiah Temple, 13, following a press conference concerning the prevention of the spread of swine flu on Friday at Gateway Elementary School in Fort Myers.

Local officials in attendance included Dr. Judith Hartner, director of the Lee County Department of Health; and Lee schools Superintendent James Browder.

The program to raise swine flu awareness, while brief, came at an opportune time.

Two football players at Island Coast High School were told to stay home for at least seven days after showing flu-like symptoms this week.

The concern is caused by the presence of the H1N1 virus, which is swine flu's medical designation. Two Lee County men in their 50s died recently of complications from the virus.

Crist offered encouragement Friday: A vaccine to combat swine flu is expected to be available by

mid-October.

Until then, the governor also offered some simple precautions:

- Wash your hands with water and soap for as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice. Crist said children know those lyrics even before they learn to count to 20.

- Sneeze into a tissue or sleeve, not your hand.

- If a someone feels sick, they should stay home.

As for the coming vaccine, it "will be given to those who need it the most," Viamonte Ros said. "There's a list being created as we speak for those most susceptible."

Hartner said the vaccine will be given free to the health department, which might charge a small administrative fee to patients for shots.

"Swine flu is everywhere in Lee County," Hartner said. "It's not regionalized in any particular place. The vaccine is another weapon we have."

## Additional Facts

[news-press.com/swineflu](http://news-press.com/swineflu)

Plug in: Find news, photos and video about the swine flu. Learn the more about the virus and connect with state health agencies.

Photo gallery: Crist discusses swine flu at Lee County school.

Video: Swine flu press conference.

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