

# PREPARE FOR FLU SEASON

updated 8/11/09 to reflect changes in CDC recommendations\*

## Seasonal Flu vs. Novel H1N1 Influenza

H1N1 is a new strain of flu virus that is causing illness worldwide, in every state in the US and at Penn State both on- and off-campus.



## Symptoms

Although H1N1 is a new influenza virus strain, the symptoms are very similar to seasonal flu and include:

- fever, cough and/or sore throat
- runny nose
- body aches
- headaches
- chills
- occasionally vomiting and diarrhea

As with seasonal flu, most people who get H1N1 recover completely with minimal, if any, medical intervention. Visit [www.cdc.gov/H1N1Flu/sick.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1Flu/sick.htm) to determine if you need to be seen by a health care provider. University Park students can also call the UHS Advice Nurse Line 24/7 at **814.863.4463**. Penn State students can schedule an appointment at University Health Services (UHS) 24/7 through our website at [www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/basics/online\\_access.cfm](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/basics/online_access.cfm) or by calling **814.863.0774** during regular business hours.

## Self Care

- Rest, drink plenty of fluids.
- Use pain and fever reducers such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen for body aches and fevers.
- **\*Stay home from classes and work for at least 24 hours after fever has subsided without the use of fever-reducing medications.**
- Wear a mask if you leave your residence hall room to use a shared bathroom or to seek medical care.

## Vaccines

- Get the seasonal flu vaccine through your hometown health care provider or at one of the flu clinics held at UHS each fall.
- Check the UHS website for information about a vaccine against H1N1.

## Prevention

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If tissues are not available, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm or shoulder.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Use alcohol-based hand cleaners when soap and water are not available.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Do not share utensils, drinks, cigarettes or personal care items.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

## Contact with Infected Persons

Students who have been in contact with someone diagnosed with H1N1 and do NOT have symptoms do NOT need to be seen by a healthcare provider. Testing will not be helpful in these situations.

The **EXCEPTION** is **anyone who is pregnant** or has a chronic medical condition, such as

- asthma
- diabetes
- cystic fibrosis
- immunosuppression (resulting from medications or certain illnesses)
- cardiovascular disease
- other chronic medical conditions

These conditions increase the risk for developing complications from the flu.

Students with these chronic conditions who have been exposed to someone with H1N1 or with flu-like symptoms and develop symptoms themselves should contact their health care provider for consultation and advice, as they may need to be seen. Prescription antiviral medications may be effective in reducing flu complications in these individuals.

## Prepare a Cold and Flu Kit

Bring a self care kit to campus that includes:

- a thermometer
- acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil)
- cough syrup
- bottled water, sports drinks and soups
- alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- boxes of tissues

## Additional Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>
- Penn State Live <http://live.psu.edu/tag/H1N1>
- Weekly UHS updates [www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/H1N1\\_Updates.cfm](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/H1N1_Updates.cfm)
- Sign up for the Parent and Family Healthline at [www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/news/famline.cfm](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/news/famline.cfm) to receive information about flu clinics and other UHS news and events via e-mail.