

## Influenza Information

### Self Care

Regardless of the type of flu you have (seasonal flu, H1N1, etc.), it is important to take care of yourself...and other people.

- **Stay home and rest up!**
- **Keep your distance** (at least 6 feet) from others. Stay out of classes, work, social events, public transportation, etc. until you have been **fever-free for at least 24 hours**. Fever should be absent *without the use of fever-reducing medicine*. Individuals who have been ill should continue to be cautious about infecting others, as they can transmit the virus for several days after symptoms are gone. (Also, a cough may linger, but is not considered reason to stay out of circulation.)
- **Monitor your temperature.** Fever can be dehydrating, so push fluids! Try to take in adequate nutrition to support your immune system.
- **Treat symptoms** with acetaminophen/Tylenol for aches and pains (NOT aspirin or aspirin-containing medicines), throat lozenges and decongestants. You should continue to take your usual prescription medications. Treatment with antiviral medications is recommended only for those at high risk of severe complications and those seriously ill. Treatment with antibiotics is not effective because the flu is caused by a virus.
- **Stay hydrated** with plenty of clear liquids (water, broth, herbal tea, etc.)
- **Limit the spread** of the flu virus by using good hygiene, hand sanitizers, cleaning supplies, etc.
- **Follow all local public health advisories** and any relevant health recommendations for travel.
- Wear a facemask to **prevent the spread of illness** if exposure to others is necessary. (See the Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use, provided by the CDC.)
- **CALL A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER** for consultation and treatment recommendations **if you** have particular health risks, **or if your symptoms worsen**.
  - o Students: call Health Services at 655-7122.
  - o Faculty/staff: call your personal health care provider.

**Individuals living in close contact** (e.g., roommate, family member) with someone who has the flu should monitor their personal health\* and be aware of any symptoms. Follow these self-care guidelines, or seek medical consultation by phone if you develop a cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose AND have a fever of greater than 100 degrees F (37.8 C).

\* PLEASE NOTE: If you have underlying health conditions that might increase your risk of complications from the flu, please call a health care provider. (Students: call the Health Office at 655-7122)

### When to Seek Help

Generally, people with the flu (the new H1N1 flu, as well as seasonal flu) can manage recovery at home with little or no medical attention. However, certain people are at higher risk of serious flu-related complications.

### Risk groups

These individuals should **consult with their health care providers with the onset of flu-like symptoms**, or following recent close contact with someone who has the flu:

- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions, including:
  - asthma
  - diabetes
  - immune-suppression
  - heart, lung, liver, or kidney disease
- Pregnant women
- Adults 65 years and older
- Children younger than five years old

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### **More serious symptoms: a warning sign**

People who have the flu and develop any of the following symptoms should call a health care provider without delay for medical advice or attention

- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- sudden dizziness
- confusion or change in level of consciousness
- severe or persistent vomiting
- severe sore throat, accompanied by swollen glands in your neck
- flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- unidentified rash
- fever of over 101 degrees.