

What You Can Do About the Flu

H1N1 influenza (a.k.a. “swine flu”) first appeared in the U.S. last spring and continued to infect people throughout the summer. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this new strain of influenza seems to be particularly infectious to people between the ages of 5 and 24, so all college campuses must prepare for the possibility that a lot more people than usual could get sick this year. Please help protect your own health and that of your campus by learning what precautions you can take to lower the risk of spreading or contracting influenza and making a Personal Influenza Plan just in case you do get sick.

For more information, go to www.uwsuper.edu/news

Precautions and Planning

- **Get your own thermometer, Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen and tissues.**
- **Maintain your own supply of hand soap and/or hand sanitizer** (at least 60% alcohol content).
- **Put SMDC-Superior in your phone: 715-392-5492 and SHCS 394-8394.**
- **Monitor the Student Digest and UWS Website for campus updates.**
- **Make a Personal Influenza Plan.** Do you have any health condition that might put you at higher risk for more severe illness, according to the CDC? Where will you recuperate if you get sick? How will you travel there? Where do you keep the contact info for everyone you should alert if you have to self-isolate (Res Life staff, instructors, etc.) Use the information on the reverse side of this sheet to help you think through your plan.
- **Don't spread or fall for rumors!** Watch for emails from UWS Student Health & Counseling and your Student Digest. If there is ever any disruption to campus operations, it will be posted on the Student Digest and the main UWS Web page. If your class is temporarily cancelled, you will be notified by your instructor or department.
- **Start a good hand washing habit.** Always wash with soap or hand sanitizer for at least 20 seconds before eating, drinking or preparing food; after using the bathroom; and if you cough or sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve.
- **Practice coughing and sneezing into your sleeve.** Viruses can't stay viable as long or spread as easily from there as they can from your hands.

- **Try to keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.** Wash hands more often if you smoke or bite your nails.
- **Get a flu shot when they are offered!**
- **When H1N1 flu shots become available get them!**
- **If you are in close contact with someone who has the flu...don't panic, and don't blame.** Influenza may be very common on campus this fall, and people may get sick despite their best efforts. Most students will *not* need to take any special actions based on ordinary exposure.
- However, if you have a “high-risk” medical condition (asthma for which you take daily medication; other chronic pulmonary disease; cardiovascular disease; diabetes; pregnancy; weaken immune system; kidney, liver, or neurological disorder) contact your healthcare provider promptly. For SMDC-Superior 392-5492. Medication may be recommended to prevent influenza infection in some cases.

Cold vs. Flu

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Comes gradually▪ Fever unlikely▪ Cough possible▪ Sore throat possible▪ Stomach feels ok▪ Body aches unlikely▪ Stuff/runny nose possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Comes on quickly▪ Fever probable▪ Dry cough possible▪ Sore throat possible▪ Vomiting, diarrhea possible▪ Body aches possible▪ Chills possible▪ Stuffy/runny nose possible |
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See other side for what to do if sick →

If you do get Sick...

Activate the Personal Influenza Plan you made at the beginning of the semester.

Take your temperature. If you have a fever (100°F/37.8°C or higher), you must stay home from work and class until you have been completely fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours, and you feel well. For most people, this will be 3 to 5 days, but it could be longer. Each residence hall front desk will soon have flu kits with thermometers and aspirin.

If you have a “high-risk” medical condition (asthma for which you take daily medication; other chronic pulmonary disease; cancer; cardiovascular disease; diabetes; pregnancy; weakened immune system; or kidney, liver, or Neurological disorder), contact your health care provider promptly. For University Health Services: (SMDC-Superior 715-392-5492 and SHCS 394-8394.) Although antiviral medications are not recommended for most healthy individuals, they are recommended for some “high-risk” cases and should be taken as soon as possible. Antibiotics do not have any effect because influenza is caused by a virus.

Most people recover fully on their own without medical treatment. Drink fluids to stay hydrated, get plenty of rest, eat what you can, and use ibuprofen and acetaminophen, as directed, to manage fever and body aches. Contact your healthcare provider if you experience any of the warning signs listed below.

Report in to Housing. If you live in University Housing, you must promptly alert housing staff that you have flu-like symptoms so you can be issued a surgical mask. People with flu generally feel weak and achy for a few days to a week. If you live in a residence hall, we strongly recommend that you recuperate at your parents’ home, or the home of a nearby relative; if it is possible for you to relocate without using public transportation, please do so.

Communicate. Remember to cancel any appointments (with your advisor, dentist, etc.), and contact your professors, teaching assistants, and employer to let them know you have influenza symptoms and cannot return to class or at work until you’re better (including completely fever-free). As with any illness, you will be responsible for getting class notes you have missed and making arrangements to make up work after you recover. All faculty are being alerted that the campus is asking students

to stay away from class if they are sick; in fact, they are receiving the same instruction, to stay home from teaching class if they get the flu.

Contact food service and arrange for a sick tray.

Tell your “close contacts” you may have flu.

That means roommates/housemates and officemates. Also, any friends, lab partners, etc., that you spent time with in the 24 hours before you started to feel sick. That way, if any of them has a “high-risk” health condition, they can contact their healthcare provider for advice and possibly medication.

Self-Isolate. While you are self-isolating, you should not go to the library, RSC, HWC, or any social events, and you should avoid public transportation. If you must leave your room, use hand sanitizer before going out, cover your nose and mouth with a surgical mask, and shield others from coughs and sneezes.

Flu viruses typically survive on surfaces for 2 to 8 hours, so do not share towels, clothing, eating utensils, telephones, keyboards, remote controls, etc., while you are infectious. Standard cleaning products should be sufficient to remove virus from surfaces. A bleach solution is not necessary, but water alone is not enough.

If possible, use a separate bathroom while you are sick. Wear a mask when you leave your room to use a shared bathroom. When you recover, wash your own sheets and towels rather than asking someone else to do the laundry. Empty your wastebasket of used tissues, etc., and take out the trash yourself.

The good news? If the thing that made you sick was H1N1, you can’t get it again. But you can still catch colds, seasonal influenza, and other flu-like illnesses, so keep up the hand washing! Because you won’t necessarily know which virus made you sick, seasonal and H1N1 vaccination are still recommended.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU DEVELOP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Shortness of breath
- Confusion or sudden dizziness
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- **Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return suddenly with fever and worse cough**