
H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Infections Alert for Institutions of Higher Education


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CDC has identified cases of H1N1 influenza virus infection in people in a number of states. CDC is working with local and state health agencies to investigate these cases.

The same virus has been found in people in Mexico, the United States and Canada and is being reported in other countries as well. Symptoms for H1N1 flu have included fever, headache, upper respiratory tract symptoms (cough, sore throat, rhinorrhea), myalgia, fatigue, vomiting, or diarrhea. Illnesses among persons infected with H1N1 flu virus have mostly been treated at home, but some cases have been hospitalized and deaths have been reported. It is anticipated that many more cases, including cases that require hospitalizations and some that result in death, will occur. Most people will not have immunity to this new virus and, as it continues to spread, more cases are expected in the coming days and weeks.

CDC has implemented its emergency response. The agency's goals are to reduce transmission and illness severity, and provide information to help health care providers, public health officials and the public address the challenges posed by the new virus. The World Health Organization has raised the worldwide pandemic alert level. In response to these developments, CDC is recommending that states, communities, institutions and individuals assess their emergency response plans and capacities.


For post secondary institutions of higher education, CDC recommends that you:

- Review your institutions plans for responding to a public health emergency and make sure they are up to date.
- Know local/state plans for institutions of higher education in the event of a mild or severe disease outbreak. This information may be available from state or local health authorities, (<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/states/index.html>).
- Ask your campus health center to develop and implement a system to track and report (to the local health department) influenza-like illness (an illness with at least fever and sore throat or cough) among students.
- Persons with influenza-like-illness should consult their physician and the institution should consult with their local or state health department for recommendations on identifying persons with H1N1 flu and ways to prevent spread of this virus
- Institutions of higher education should promote everyday preventive actions for students and staff: 1) Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. 2) Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. 3) Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. 4) Avoid close contact with sick people. 5) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way. 6) If you get

influenza-like illness symptoms, stay home from work or school except to seek medical care and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

- **Monitor the postings on the CDC web site and that of your local and state health departments and follow local health department advice about possible closure of colleges and universities**
- Contact your local public health department if you have questions or suspected cases.

Institutions of higher education can help protect the health of their staff and their students by calling attention to the every day preventive actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of influenza. (Please consider posting or distributing the everyday actions to prevent the spread of influenza attached with this memo across campus including residential dorms).

Review and implement, if needed, CDC Guidelines and Recommendations for Preventing the Spread of Influenza (the Flu) in a declared pandemic. (See appendix 7, *Pandemic Influenza Community Mitigation Interim Planning Guide for Colleges and Universities*, available as at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/commitigation.html> .