

NMSU Update on H1N1 Influenza:
September 17, 2009 ([pdf version](#))

Dear NMSU Community:

As you have likely seen in the media and heard on campus, the flu season is under way and seasonal influenza as well as H1N1 influenza (Swine Flu) has been diagnosed at universities across the country. Medical personnel at New Mexico State University have diagnosed the first case of H1N1 influenza in a 20-year-old female student living off campus. We have seen approximately 11 cases of influenza-like illness since the semester started on Aug. 15. The state of New Mexico has been categorized by the Centers for Disease Control as having sporadic influenza infection.

NMSU has been preparing for an influx of influenza-like illness and diagnosed influenza by providing information through an updated website at <http://wellness.nmsu.edu>, posters in buildings across campus, a display regarding the H1N1 influenza, prevention presentations for campus departments and student groups and immunization clinics.

If you have questions or need information about influenza symptoms, contact the Student Health Center at 646-1512 and ask for the triage nurse.

The Student Health center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The University Health Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you have an urgent medical need after hours with a fever of 103 degrees or fever in combination with a chronic health condition, seek prompt medical attention through an after-hours clinic or a hospital emergency room.

The Student Health Center will have the seasonal flu vaccine available by October 1, 2009. The cost for the vaccine is \$12 for students. Employees, dependents and spouses enrolled in the state-covered NMSU health plans can register online for the upcoming immunization clinic set for Oct. 19-23, in the Academic Research Building C Room 110(Environmental Health & Safety Training Room). For more information or to register visit www.southwestpharmacy.com.

Free flu vaccinations will be available from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 10, at Memorial Medical Center and from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 7, at Mountain View Medical Center.

The H1N1 influenza vaccine was approved for production by the Food and Drug Administration on Sept. 15. We anticipate the vaccine will be available for the community in late fall semester.

We want to emphasize the importance of prevention and self-care strategies:

1. While you are well, create a "Flu Kit" by purchasing a non-aspirin fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Advil, a thermometer, a decongestant, tissues and hand sanitizer. You should also keep a supply of water and ready-to-eat canned or frozen foods such as soup, cereal, protein bars, peanut butter, crackers, etc. Please note: Wearing a mask when you are well does little to keep you from catching a virus. It is most effective for those who are sick to wear a mask to keep from spreading germs through coughing and sneezing.
2. Get vaccinated for seasonal and H1N1 flu. The vaccination schedule for seasonal flu is listed above. We will be providing updated information on the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available.
3. Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
4. Practice respiratory etiquette by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues into the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, shoulder or sleeve, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
5. If you do get flu or flu-like illness (fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue), drink plenty of fluids, get plenty of rest, and take a non-aspirin medication for fever. Seek professional medical advice as needed, but especially if you have shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, increasing fever, dizziness or confusion, or severe or persistent vomiting.

Remember, if you have flu or flu-like symptoms, don't go to class or work and stay home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever. Call in and report your flu or flu-like symptoms to your instructor or department.

For the most up-to-date-information, you can visit <http://wellness.nmsu.edu>.

We will notify you via this website about any changes in our institution's strategies to prevent the spread of flu on our campus. Any urgent updates will be provided via the university's emergency notification system via e-mail, voice and SMS. If you have not done so recently, go to MyNMSU to update your emergency contact information.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Diven, M.D.
NMSU Medical Director