

H1N1 Flu (“swine flu”)

The following information was obtained from the CDC’s website. <http://www.cdc.gov>

What is H1N1 and how is it spread? H1N1 is a new influenza virus that causes illness. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. People infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people. You do not get H1N1 virus from eating pork products. People with underlying health issues or compromised immune systems are at greater risk for complications from H1N1.

What are the signs/symptoms? H1N1 symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Many people who have been infected have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. Severe illness and death have occurred as a result of this virus.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick? H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public in the fall. A vaccine will also be available for seasonal flu. The following everyday actions can help prevent the spread of influenza. **Enroll yourself in MU Alert to receive up-to-date emergency notifications by going to [mvMU](#) and select the MU Alert icon in the top right corner.**

- **Cover your nose/ mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.**
- **Wash your hands often with soap and warm water (10-20 seconds), especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective and do not need water to work.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.**
- **Clean hard surfaces and frequently touched objects.**
- **Avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing.**
- **Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues and other related items may be useful. Have a plan with your family.**

If your roommate is having flu like symptoms, you should move to another room while they recover. Please contact your RA for more information.

What should I do if I get sick? If you become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, you should stay home and away from others. **CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) You should not leave your home except to seek medical care.** This means avoiding class, work, shopping, travel and public gatherings. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze. If you have severe illness or are at high risk for flu complications, call your health care provider or seek medical care. **Student Health’s phone number is 304-691-1100.** There are antiviral medications available for H1N1 infections. They work best if administered within 2 days of the first symptoms.

Due to the nature of this illness and care needed, it is recommended that students go home (**by private vehicle**) where they can be cared for by a family member. Students that cannot go home are asked to self isolate in their room. You should drink plenty of liquids and you may want to take over-the-counter medications to alleviate symptoms. Please contact your RA and let them know you are experiencing flu like symptoms. They will assist in getting meals to you while in isolation. You also need to contact your professors to let them know you will be missing class and make necessary arrangements for your coursework.

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care immediately.

- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen**
- **Sudden dizziness**
- **Confusion**
- **Severe or persistent vomiting**
- **Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough**

Information and updates on H1N1 virus can be obtained at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm and from our local Health Department at www.cabellhealth.org.