

10/19/09 UA H1N1 flu status update #5

The amount of H1N1 flu illness occurring in members of the UA community is starting to increase again in line with the increase in cases being seen in the general Tucson community. This is to be expected as we enter the more traditional flu season (November through April) and weather. The majority of people who become ill with H1N1 flu are still having a mild illness and are recovering generally within 7-10 days. It is estimated that the H1N1 flu will be responsible for over 80% of the flu cases during this flu season.

Flu prevention and illness management is still very important. Please continue to follow the guidelines that have been communicated throughout this pandemic flu outbreak:

Mind your hands and sneezes | Wash your hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds; keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth; cover coughs and sneezes using a tissue or your sleeve (but not your bare hand). Teach these practices to everyone at home.

If you're sick, stay home | When you come to school/work sick, you're putting your classmates, instructors and/or co-workers' health at risk. Getting this virus will be especially serious for those considered "high risk" for complications - people who are pregnant and those who have diabetes, asthma, heart disease and other conditions. Along those same lines, we're also asking you to stay away from health clinics and medical offices. If your symptoms are severe and you feel you need to seek medical help, please call your doctor's office before going in. Severe symptoms include: fever of 102.5 or higher, or a lower fever that lasts more than three days; severe cough or chest pain; nausea and vomiting; severe headache.

Get flu shots | We recommend getting the vaccine for the H1N1 flu.

H1N1 vaccine information -

We are expecting to begin receiving small supplies of the H1N1 vaccine in late October or early November and will begin offering H1N1 flu shot clinics soon after we receive those supplies. Because early supplies of the vaccine will be more limited, the focus of our initial H1N1 flu vaccination efforts will be on the following groups based on recommendations by the CDC and their Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices:

- students age 18 or younger
- anyone over 18 with a high risk medical condition
- women who are pregnant
- people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- health care personnel and health professions students (e.g. medical students, nursing students, etc.).

We will communicate the dates, times and locations of campus H1N1 flu shot clinics once we have received vaccine and have scheduled those clinics.

This information is from the Vaccine Information Sheets developed by the CDC:

Vaccines are available to protect against 2009 H1N1 influenza.

- These vaccines are made just like seasonal flu vaccines.
- They are expected to be as safe and effective as seasonal flu vaccines.
- They will not prevent “influenza-like” illnesses caused by other viruses.
- They will not prevent seasonal flu. You should also get seasonal influenza vaccine, if you want to be protected against seasonal flu.