

11/02/09 UA H1N1 flu status update #6

The amount of H1N1 flu illness occurring in members of the UA community has increased over the past 3-4 weeks in line with the increases in cases being seen in the general Tucson community over that same period of time. 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 -

The UA Campus Health Service has received a very small supply of H1N1 flu vaccine and hopes to be receiving more later this month. Because the initial supply of the vaccine is very 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 19 to 24 years old with a high risk medical condition
- women who are pregnant
- people with physical disabilities
- 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.

As we receive more of the H1N1 vaccine, we will expand the availability of the shots to the next level of high-risk groups –

- anyone age 19-24 years old
- people over 24 with a high-risk medical conditions -- and eventually to
- the entire campus community.

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.