

12/04/09 UA H1N1 flu status update #11

We have seen a significant decrease in H1N1 flu illness occurring in students over the past three weeks in line with the decreases in cases being seen in the general Tucson community over that same period of time.

What has been seen during this second wave of the H1N1 pandemic flu is that the majority of people who have become ill with H1N1 flu have had a mild illness and have recovered fully, generally within 7-10 days. So far, we have not identified any cases of seasonal flu – it has all been H1N1 flu. It is estimated that the H1N1 flu will be responsible for over 80% of the flu cases during this flu season.

It is unknown whether there will be a third wave of H1N1 flu. If a third wave does occur, it will likely occur in January and February in conjunction with some seasonal flu. Historically speaking, if third waves of pandemic flu have occurred, they have been less intense and shorter in duration than the second wave (usually the worst wave) due to having more of the population immune by the time the third wave hits. This is why people are still being encouraged to get an H1N1 flu shot so we can minimize any impact this virus will have in early 2010 if it tries to return in a third pandemic wave.

Since vaccine supplies are still limited (see below for H1N1 vaccine availability*) and H1N1 flu is still circulating across the U.S., 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 chronic medical 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 Campus Health Service has received additional doses of H1N1 vaccine and is expanding availability to all those UA students and staff who are:

- U of A students or staff members age 24 or younger
- U of A students or staff members age 25 years and older with a high-risk medical condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes, heart disease, immune suppression, etc.)

- People with physical disabilities
- Pregnant women
- U of A students or staff members who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- U of A students or staff members who are health care personnel and health professions students (medical students, nursing students, etc.), as well as emergency response support personnel.

It is anticipated that we will be able to expand the availability of the H1N1 vaccine to the entire campus community in the later half of December.

The next H1N1 influenza vaccine clinics will be held on:

- **Tuesday, December 8 from 10am-4pm
On the UA Mall near the Student Union**
- **Wednesday, December 9th from 9:30am-4pm
On the UA Mall near the Student Union**

There is no charge for H1N1 flu vaccine received through the Campus Health Service.

*These will be the last H1N1 flu shot clinics held outside the Campus Health Service/Highland Commons Building for the fall semester.

If you would like to receive the vaccine and cannot attend the clinics offered outside of Campus Health, come to the Campus Health Service between the hours of 8am-12noon and 1pm-4:00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday –or- from 9am-12noon and 1pm-4:00pm on Wednesdays. Enter through the Urgent Care Clinic doors on the main floor of the Highland Commons Building and proceed directly to the Immunization Clinic. There is no need to check in at the front desk.

Please note: Campus Health will close at 3pm on December 10th (Reading Day).

There is no charge for an H1N1 flu vaccine received through the Campus Health Service.

The H1N1 flu vaccine is produced in the same way as seasonal flu vaccines. The shots are proving to be just as safe. They will not provide protection against seasonal flu, or against flu-like illnesses that can be caused by other viruses.

To protect against seasonal flu, which is more likely to occur as we approach January and February (typical peak flu months), you'll need to get a seasonal flu shot. Seasonal flu vaccine is currently only available locally through Mollen Clinics. To see their flu shot clinic schedule, go to <http://mollen.com/>. There is a charge associated with the seasonal flu vaccine.