

12/014/09 UA H1N1 flu status update #13

We have seen very little H1N1 flu illness occurring in students over the past two 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, which started on campus in mid August, 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.

**H1N1 flu vaccine supplies locally have improved significantly in the past few weeks (see below for H1N1 vaccine availability\*). H1N1 flu is still circulating across the U.S. and even though more vaccine is now available, 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 UA students, staff, and retirees.

\*There will be no further H1N1 flu shot clinics held outside the Campus Health Service/Highland Commons Building for the fall semester or during the winter break.

If you would like to receive the vaccine, 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.

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

The H1N1 flu vaccine is also now more widely available in the Tucson community. To find locations for other H1N1 flu shot clinics, please check the Pima County Health Department's website at [http://www.pimahealth.org/disease/h1n1\\_influenza.asp](http://www.pimahealth.org/disease/h1n1_influenza.asp).

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.