

To Students, Faculty, Staff, and Parents during Current Flu Conditions

Dear students, faculty, staff and parents,

As you may know, flu can be spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to help prevent the spread of flu here at UNH, **but, we need your help to accomplish this.**

We are working closely with health officials across New Hampshire to monitor flu conditions and make decisions about the best steps to take concerning our institution. We will keep you updated with new information as it becomes available to us (<http://www.unh.edu/health-services/>). If possible, please plan on joining other members of the university community at **We Are All Players: Preparing for the H1N1 Global Flu Pandemic** on Tuesday 9.29.09 MUB Strafford Room 12:40 – 2:00PM. This will be a forum on the latest up-to-date information on H1N1 for what you need to know and what you need to do.

For now, we are doing everything we can to keep our institution operating as usual. Here are a few things you can do to help:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by regularly washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Hand cleaners containing at least 60% alcohol are effective when hand washing with soap and water is not possible.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue only once and throw it away. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Always perform hand hygiene after having contact with secretions or contaminated materials. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Other symptoms of the flu besides fever include body aches, chills, fatigue, sore throat, and possibly vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- **Stay home if you have flu or flu-like illness for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever** (100 degrees Fahrenheit) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating) and are feeling better. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Don't go to class or work, or participate in social activities.
- **Talk with your health care providers about whether you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu.** Also if you are at higher risk for flu complications from 2009 H1N1 flu, you should consider getting the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm.

If this year's flu season becomes more severe, we may take the following additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus:

- **Allow students, faculty, and staff at higher risk for complications to stay home.** These students, faculty, and staff should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
- **Find ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) in classrooms such as moving desks farther apart, leaving empty seats between students, holding outdoor classes, and using distance learning methods.
- **Extend the time sick students, faculty, or staff stay home or in their residence.** During severe flu conditions sick people should stay home for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- **Suspend classes.** This decision will be made by the University together with local and state public health officials. The length of time classes should be suspended will depend on the goal of suspending classes as well as the severity and extent of illness.

As a further step in your course planning, we encourage you to make full use of Blackboard as a resource for course materials that will allow students to remain engaged with your course even if they are unable to attend class (and in the event that you are unable to attend class as a result of illness). Additionally, to the extent that the integrity of course requirements can be sustained, we ask that you be appropriately flexible in accommodating legitimate student absences associated with the flu. Please do not require a doctor's note for students to validate their illness or to return to class.

For the most up-to-date information on flu, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636).