

FLU INFORMATION

TESTING AND TREATMENT OF INFLUENZA LIKE ILLNESS

LAB TESTING FOR H1N1 VIRUS

The New Hampshire Department of Public Health Labs is limiting testing for the H1N1 virus to patients who are admitted to hospitals for severe influenza like illness, clusters of outbreaks in health care facilities, schools and other areas determined by the NH Department of Public Health. In accordance with state recommendations, Health Services does not test for H1N1 because testing will not affect treatment of influenza like illness. Both the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu are treated the same.

TREATMENT OF INFLUENZA LIKE ILLNESS WITH MEDICATION

Treatment with prescription antiviral medications is not routinely necessary for otherwise healthy people. Prescription antiviral medication, such as Tamiflu, is generally only required if a patient is at a higher risk of medical complications should they become ill with flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently recommends treatment with antiviral medications for:

- Children younger than 5 years old
- Adults 65 years or older
- Pregnant women
- Persons with certain medical conditions
- Persons younger than 19 years old who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy

You may not be prescribed an antiviral medication for your flu like illness if you do not meet one of the above CDC categories. Otherwise healthy individuals recover after a few day of illness.

SELF-CARE OF FLU

If you have the flu, it is important that you care for yourself and limit your exposure to others.

Stay home when you are sick

- UNH recommends that, if you live within a 250 mile radius of campus and can get there by private transportation you should go home, if ill.
- If you are unable to go home, please remain in your place of residence (residence hall room, apartment, etc.). You should not go to classes, work, dining halls or participate in social activities.
- Avoid close contact with others.
- If you must leave your residence (to go to the bathroom or outside), wear a facemask, if available and tolerated, to reduce the risk of spreading the virus when you cough, sneeze, talk or breathe. If a mask is unavailable, use a tissue and dispose of the tissue properly.
- Contact your faculty (call or email) to let them know you are ill.

Take care

- Rest, rest, and rest some more.
- Eat nutritious foods (Students who are ill or unable to leave their residence hall rooms should contact their Resident Assistant or Resident Hall Director to coordinate a takeout meal with Dining Services).
- Increase your intake of clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks).
- If you have a sore throat, gargle with 1/2 tsp salt in 4 oz warm water and increase humidity (use a vaporizer/humidifier).
- Consider taking acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Advil). These analgesics will help to lower a fever and reduce headaches and body aches. If fever 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher consider alternating your acetaminophen and ibuprofen, 2 tablets of each, no sooner than every four hours. Children and adolescents should avoid aspirin when they have the flu because it can cause Reye's syndrome, a rare but serious illness.
- Consider taking an expectorant (Robitussin), if you have a cough. This will help liquefy the secretions and help your body cough up phlegm. You can also use cough drops or throat lozenges for symptom relief.
- Remember, the flu is a virus and cannot be treated with antibiotics. Also, antiviral medication is usually not recommended in most cases.
- Manage your stress.

Please note: UNH Health Services does not provide doctor's notes to verify illness or to confirm that students can return to class.

As stated in the September 4th letter to the UNH community, Provost Aber asked faculty "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."

You should seek immediate medical care if you have any of the following:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in chest or abdomen
- **Recurring** dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever or worse cough

Health Services | University of New Hampshire

If symptoms worsen, please call (603) 862-2856 when Health Services is open
or call (603) 862-1530 when Health Services is closed (after-hours).