



Student H1N1 Influenza Information Letter

September 1, 2009

UNC Charlotte is excited to welcome back our fellow 49er's to the start of another exciting and successful year. We want to ensure that you have a safe and healthy school year. In this letter, you will find some very important information on influenza and UNC Charlotte's preparation and recommendations concerning the novel H1N1 virus (formerly known as the swine flu). Being prepared and knowing the resources that are provided across campus is an important step in building a strong college career and experience for everyone involved.

INFLUENZA INFORMATION FOR UNC CHARLOTTE STUDENTS

The spread of influenza has become a serious issue of concern, especially in light of events in the past year. UNC Charlotte has worked hard to prepare our campus and community on how to manage the spread of influenza. We urge you to carefully read the following information from the Student Health Center. It is important for you to know how to prevent infection and what to do if you become infected.

In the spring of 2009, the first cases of novel H1N1 were identified in the United States, and spread quickly worldwide, leading the World Health Organization to declare a global pandemic. U.S. influenza surveillance systems indicate that overall influenza activity is decreasing in the country at this time; however, novel H1N1 outbreaks are ongoing in parts of the U.S., in some cases with intense activity. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is concerned about the upcoming fall flu season and is watching the evolution of the novel H1N1 virus in the Southern Hemisphere to determine if it will produce more severe disease. UNC Charlotte health officials are working closely with state and local health departments in planning for this year's flu season.

The best strategies for reducing the risk of contracting the flu are practicing good hygiene habits and receiving both the seasonal flu vaccine and the novel H1N1 vaccines.

Good Hygiene Habits:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Use tissues one time only - discard in wastebasket after use.
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve if a tissue is not available. This will prevent the passage of germs from infected hands to objects or other persons.
- Stay at least six feet away from anyone you suspect is ill.
- Eat a balanced diet, drink lots of water, exercise regularly and get plenty of rest.

Common symptoms of the flu:

- Fever higher than 100.5°F.
- Chills, congestion, cough, sore throat, fatigue, headache and body aches.
- Some people report having nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- Sudden onset of illness.

What should you do if you have symptoms of the flu?

- If you are running a fever, you should keep away from others as much as possible to avoid spreading the flu virus.

- Stay in the dorm room or home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities (the fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). This means that you should avoid normal activities, including work, school, exercising, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.
- If you live in the Charlotte area or reasonably close by, you should go home, preferably by private car, to avoid making others sick. At this time, we do not expect to need special isolation housing. Please be assured that we are prepared if these kinds of measures do become necessary.
- You should try to identify a “buddy” who can bring you supplies and meals if you become ill.
- UNC Charlotte health officials are working closely with faculty, housing and dining personnel to accommodate the needs of students if they become ill.
- If you miss class due to illness, you should notify the Office of the Dean of Students at 704-687-2375 and e-mail your instructors to notify them of your absence.
- If you have severe illness or are in a high risk group for flu complications, you should contact the Student Health Center at 704-687-7400. The Student Health Center will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed.

Significant points to note:

- The seasonal flu vaccine will be available in October at UNC Charlotte.
- The novel H1N1 vaccine is totally separate from the seasonal flu vaccine. It will be a two shot vaccine and the shots will need to be given 21 days apart. It is expected that the novel H1N1 vaccines will be available at UNC Charlotte in mid October or early November.
- BOTH the seasonal flu and the H1N1 vaccines are recommended for ALL students.
- High risks groups include pregnant women and people between the ages of 6 months and 24 years, so most college students are at high risk for infection.
- The severity of the illness is expected to be similar to regular seasonal flu but the CDC is still monitoring this.
- You will receive an e-mail with instructions for getting vaccinated once these vaccines become available and this information will be available on the Student Health Center website.

What can you do to prepare?

- Practice good hygiene habits, especially during flu season.
- Put together a “Flu-Care Kit” for yourself. Suggested items include:
 - Acetaminophen (Tylenol or generic) and/or Ibuprofen (Advil or generic)
 - Digital Thermometer (not mercury please)
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Tissues
 - Cough drops
 - Alcohol or bleach wipes for disinfecting surfaces
 - Surgical Mask
 - Gatorade drink mix packets
 - Dried soup packets

We are looking forward to serving you this year at the UNC Charlotte Student Health Center and we appreciate your assistance in keeping yourself, and all of our students, healthy and focused on this wonderful educational opportunity.

Student Health Center
UNC Charlotte