



Student FAQs for H1N1

How do I know if I have the flu? If you are experiencing fever or chills and cough or sore throat you may have seasonal or H1N1 flu. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. A fever is a temperature that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

How does the flu spread? It generally spreads person-to-person mostly by the coughing and sneezing of infected persons. It also may be spread by coming into contact with something that has been contaminated with the flu virus such as clothing, counter surfaces, phones, door knobs, etc.

What happens if I get exposed to the flu? Illness can start about 2 days (range 1-4) after being exposed to the flu. Some people MAY be able to give the illness to others 1 day before they feel sick. Not everyone that is exposed will develop illness.

What should I do if I think I have the flu? Stay home and self-isolate. Do not attend classes, work, or other group functions. Contact your professor by phone or email to notify them of your illness and absence from class. Have a roommate, friend, or family member bring you meals. Limit contact with others until you are fever-free. Most cases of the flu are mild and you do not need to see a doctor.

How long will the flu last and when can I return to class or work? Most of the cases that we have seen on the Sac State campus have been mild, lasting less than a week. Do not return to class, work, or social functions until you are fever-free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours.

What are the treatments for the flu? Get plenty of rest, drink fluids, and treat symptoms with drugs like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), no aspirin. Throat lozenges may help to relieve a sore throat. Antiviral drugs may shorten illness when used but need to be started within 2 days of symptoms. These drugs require a doctor's prescription and are expensive. They are currently recommended only for the extremely ill (e.g. hospitalized patients) or people who are at higher risk for complications.

When is it necessary to see a doctor? If you experience any difficulty in breathing, are unable to drink adequate fluids, have persistent vomiting, or if you or anyone is extremely concerned about you and feel you must be seen, you should contact your doctor or the Student Health Center at 278-6461. A medical provider will talk with you by phone and determine if you should come into the health center to be evaluated.

Should I wear a mask? Masks may offer some - but not full protection - against catching the flu virus. If you are caring for someone with the flu or have the flu yourself you can wear a mask to help limit the spread of the virus through coughing or sneezing. If you come into the health center with flu-like symptoms we will ask you to wear a mask to help protect others from getting the flu.

Is there a vaccine to prevent the flu? Yes. There is a seasonal flu vaccine that is available now to protect from seasonal flu which is common in December through March.

Is there a vaccine to prevent the H1N1 flu? A vaccine for H1N1 is currently underway and is expected to be available in late October. This vaccine is likely to be two shots with the second shot given 3 weeks after the first shot.

When and where can I get the vaccines? The vaccine will be available for all students at the Student Health Center and at various events on campus. Please visit the SHC website at www.csus.edu/hlth for times and locations.

Is there a charge for the vaccine? No. Both the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 vaccines are “free” to students who pay the student health services fee.

How can I best prevent getting the flu?

- Cover your cough with a tissue or cough into your elbow or sleeve
- Wash your hands frequently, hand sanitizer is also good
- Avoid contact with ill persons
- Get vaccinated as recommended