

RESIDENCE LIFE & HOUSING HEALTH UPDATES

This page contains the latest information, guidelines and recommendations for the Norfolk State University community in regard to the H1N1 influenza virus. In addition to regularly monitoring this page, campus community members are urged to register for the NSU Campus Alerts system, if you are not already a registered user.

Updates for H1N1 Influenza

For many years, NSU has had emergency plans in place to address wide-ranging campus issues and health concerns. We have extended these preparedness efforts in order to respond to the H1N1 pandemic. Our emergency response teams receive regular input from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Virginia Department of Public Health, and many other governmental health agencies.

H1N1 pandemic flu is widespread throughout the world. Fortunately, the vast majority of cases are mild and, at this point, infections with the H1N1 virus appear no more virulent or severe than most seasonal cases of influenza. These infections do seem to occur more frequently in children and young adults because the virus is new and therefore there are no immunities in the population to this flu strain.

Cases of H1N1 have already appeared on most college campuses. In accordance with predictions from the CDC, we expect to see more cases this fall, consistent with what is happening in the wider public communities. We strongly encourage all members of the NSU community to take the standard precautions adopted during the flu season and to play an active role in our public health prevention efforts.

Take Action

Classes and Activities

Classes and other activities at NSU have opened as scheduled this semester. The emergency response team will monitor the campus situation, working with the Virginia Department of Public Health team located in Norfolk, and make recommendations regarding changes in or cancellations of campus activities on the basis of a significant flu outbreak. **The President and/or Provost will make any decisions regarding the cancellation of classes.** Any decision to cancel classes or activities will be communicated broadly to faculty, students and staff through the campus e-daily, email, NSUalert.com, the university's emergency alert system and other communication vehicles.

Public Health Precautions

It is **important** for all faculty, staff, and students to take the following flu/respiratory disease precautions:

- * Avoid contact with ill persons
- * Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze
- * Throw used tissues in the trash
- * Do not share food, drink, or utensils
- * Wash your hands with soap and water frequently, or use an alcohol-based hand gel, particularly after you sneeze

As this is not a gastrointestinal viral infection, therefore, intensive cleaning for food facilities (beyond normal cleaning) is not needed.

Treatment and Response

The majority of individuals who contract this virus will not need to seek a doctor's treatment. **Faculty, staff, and students who develop flu symptoms** should remain at home (or in their room) until 24 hours after they are fever-free (and without medication that would lower temperature). A mild, lingering cough may occur. Barring any other flu symptoms, this cough should not prevent students from returning to class.

If you have been in contact with someone who has the flu, onset of symptoms can take up to three days. If you experience any flu symptoms within this time period, please stay home to limit the spread of the virus. If you are pregnant, or if you have a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, cancer, asthma, heart or lung problems, or a weakened immune system, you should consult with your physician or campus health services to see if Tamiflu is needed.

Medication and Vaccinations

Generally, Tamiflu is prescribed for individuals with flu who are either hospitalized, have a chronic medical condition (as listed above, under Treatment and Response), or have a suppressed immune system. Tamiflu for influenza is not a cure – and only reduces symptoms and decreases length of recovery time by about 24 hours.

The following vaccinations are expected to be available fall 2009:

- **Seasonal Flu Vaccine:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that all students get vaccinated for the seasonal flu. This vaccine will be available for students, faculty and staff at the Spartan Health Center for \$22.
- **H1N1 Vaccine:** Recent recommendations from the CDC have placed individuals under age 24 in the top priority group for receiving the H1N1 vaccine. More information will be available in the coming weeks regarding how and when this vaccine will be given.

Stay Informed

More information on the H1N1 flu is available on the following websites:

- Policy guidance is now available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the H1N1 virus and its impact on the higher education community. You will find it here: <http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/higheredguidance.html>
- CDC has also created a health-focused toolkit for colleges and universities, located here: <http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/higheredtoolkit.html>
- The Department of Education's online flu resources for the education community can be found here: <http://www.ed.gov/h1n1flu>
- NSU Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness can be found at www.NSUalert.com.
- The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is offering real-time information regarding outbreaks and new directives at <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/>.
- The CDC has an informational site about H1N1 influenza at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.
- Monitor the NSU web site www.nsu.edu for additional updates and information specific to the Norfolk State University community.

Student and parents who have questions may contact the Spartan Health Center: (757) 623-3090.

Thank you for your efforts to keep all members of the Spartan family in good health. Although we can't eliminate the spread of this virus, our collective efforts can significantly minimize its reach and overall impact.

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