

# H1N1 Questions and Answers for Students at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

(September, 2009)

## **What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?**

Symptoms can include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms can include runny nose, body aches, headache, fatigue, diarrhea or vomiting.

## **How can I avoid getting sick?**

Frequent and thorough hand-washing with soap and warm water reduces your risk of getting the flu. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer is a good alternative if soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer is available throughout the SON. Good hand-washing is especially important after coughing or sneezing.

You should avoid sharing eating and drinking utensils.

You should frequently clean your living quarters, especially commonly used surfaces, such as doorknobs, refrigerator handles, remote controls, computer keyboards, countertops, faucet handles and bathroom areas.

## **What should I do if I think I have symptoms of H1N1?**

Stay home and call your health care provider.

## **When can I return to my normal activities, including class?**

You should stay in your room for at least 24 hours after – without the help of fever-reducing medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen – you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever such as chills or sweats. A fever is defined as a temperature of 100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C or greater.

## **What happens when I miss classes, homework assignments or exams?**

Faculty members are being instructed to allow legitimate absences, which includes absences due to flu or other illness. Specifically, it is a legitimate absence to stay out of class until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever without taking fever-reducing medication. Students are expected to notify their professors immediately by telephone or e-mail should they need to miss classes or clinicals due to illness and arrange to make up missed assignments. Faculty members have been urged particularly to accommodate students afflicted with the flu. While you are out, be sure to check your course websites for updates.

## **If I get sick, how can I avoid passing on the virus?**

We ask you and all students who feel sick to be good citizens of the university community by avoiding or minimizing social contact. You should particularly avoid large gatherings, including classes, social events or athletic events. You should wear a mask, wash your hands frequently and stay at a distance from other people. You should cough or sneeze into tissues and immediately dispose of the tissues. If no tissue is available, you should cough or sneeze into your sleeves, not your hands. You should remain in your room or apartment unless seeking medical care and should not attend class or any group events until you are fever-free, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours.

## **Will H1N1 vaccine be available?**

It is not yet clear when vaccination will begin, because the H1N1 vaccine is still in production and undergoing testing. When it does become available, it will be made available first on a priority basis to high-risk recipients, such as pregnant women and health care workers. We will be receiving our vaccine supply through the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. If supplies are still limited when we begin receiving our vaccine, we may initially need to prioritize certain high risk-groups of students based on DHMH guidelines.

## **Should I get the seasonal flu shot?**

We encourage everyone at the SON to get the shot. It is available free of charge through Occupational Health. Watch *The Daily SON* for times and locations.

**Who can I call if I have questions?**

Contact Sandra Angell, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, at 410.955.7544 or [sangell@son.jhmi.edu](mailto:sangell@son.jhmi.edu).