

Fall 2009

Dear Residents, Parents, and Families:

As you prepare for the fall 2009 semester, we would like to address issues related to Novel H1N1 influenza (formerly known as “swine flu”). Novel H1N1 influenza continues to be widespread around the country and worldwide. At this time, H1N1 is not considered to be any more virulent or dangerous than regular seasonal flu. The symptoms of Novel H1N1 influenza include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, runny nose, and some people have reported vomiting and diarrhea.

This situation is not a cause for alarm, but it is a reason for planning and taking basic, sensible measures in helping residents watch for and manage influenza-like illness (ILI). The following recommendations are based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, which can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general\\_info.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm).

1. Residents are generally in close contact with each other doing activities in group settings that increase the likelihood of infectious disease spread. All residents are encouraged to adhere to good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices. Everyone should wash their hands thoroughly and frequently and use hand sanitizer, and everyone should cover their nose and mouth with their sleeve or elbow anytime they cough or sneeze. Flyers reminding students about hand washing and respiratory etiquette will be posted in the residence halls. Hand-sanitizer dispensers are available in all residence hall bathrooms and at the entrance to all of our dining centers.
2. Residents should monitor themselves for any flu symptoms prior to travelling to the University of Colorado at Boulder for move-in. Flu symptoms include an illness of sudden onset with a high fever (generally over 100.4°C), sore throat, and a cough. People with flu may often have a headache, runny nose, fatigue, body aches, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.
3. If residents have flu symptoms, they should consider consulting their healthcare provider. Sick individuals should stay at home and defer from resuming regular activities, including reporting to campus, until one full day after their symptoms resolve (Please contact Housing Reservation before Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> to let them know that you still intend to come to the University or you will lose your room assignment). There is no recommended treatment with anti-virals unless you are severely ill or at risk for complications.
4. If residents have been in close contact with someone who was confirmed to have influenza A—the type of influenzas that includes H1N1—they should self-monitor for symptoms and stay at home or in their room if they develop symptoms. Generally, the incubation period for flu is between 1-4 days and sometimes as long as 7 days. The duration of flu symptoms varies but is generally about one week long.
5. People who are at higher risk for developing complications from a flu infection include children younger than five years old, people 65 or older, and anyone with chronic medical conditions that predispose them to complications from regular seasonal flu such as asthma, diabetes, immuno-suppression due to chemotherapy, or pregnancy.
6. The Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDHE) coordinates testing for H1N1. CDPHE will not test specifically for H1N1 virus unless a patient has already tested positive for influenza A and is hospitalized. Non-hospitalized patients *will not* be tested for H1N1 flu, even if they test positive for influenza A. Therefore, it will not be possible to know if a student who comes down with symptoms has the seasonal flu or H1N1.
7. The CDC, CDPHE, and our local health department anticipate H1N1 vaccine to be available for populations at the highest risk for developing complications sometime in the late fall. Since vaccine is not anticipated to be widely available at first, the initial distributions will be to those who are most at risk for hospitalizations from flu. The university will be following CDC guidelines for distribution and will make the vaccine available according to those guidelines.
8. Since it is highly likely that seasonal flu strains will be circulating at the same time as H1N1, all students are encouraged to get the seasonal flu vaccine to decrease the likelihood that a person will be simultaneously infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu.
9. Our residence halls are full for fall semester. Therefore, in the event that a student gets sick, it will not be possible to move the student or the student’s roommate. Ill students will be encouraged to self-isolate as much as possible, practice good hygiene, and good respiratory etiquette. Roommates should also adhere to good hygiene practices and respiratory etiquette, not share cups, utensils, drinks, or lip balms, and try not to have close face-to-face contact with an ill roommate. Our dining services can provide sick trays for students who are ill.
10. Students are encouraged to bring a non-mercury thermometer, hand sanitizer, and basic ibuprophen or acetaminophen with them to school.
11. The housing and dining services website <http://housing.colorado.edu> will post updates as needed. A link to this information will be provided on our home page.

We have asked our housing and dining services staff to adhere to good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices as well. We appreciate your efforts to monitor your health and practice good hand hygiene. Please let us know if you have additional questions (303-492-7260), and we look forward to seeing you on campus later this month.