

From NYU Student Health Center <health.communications@nyu.edu>
Sent Tuesday, August 25, 2009 5:36 pm
Subject H1N1 Fall Preparation

Dear NYU Students & Parents:

The start of the academic year at New York University is upon us and a few short days from now, we will be welcoming both new and ongoing students back to campus for the Fall semester.

As expected, H1N1 flu has remained a focus of attention for health authorities and providers, including campus health officials across the country. Consistent with the advice of public health authorities, NYU plans to remain operational and continue our educational mission in the face of possible outbreaks on campus.

New York University has prepared throughout the spring and summer to address the expected increase in the number of flu cases this fall as students and staff return to classes (please refer to <http://www.nyu.edu/shc/flu> for a brief summary of our planning and the latest updates throughout the academic year).

At this juncture, we are writing to remind you of the ways in which you as a student and as a parent, can help yourself and your son or daughter - and, by extension, the entire NYU community - to prevent the unnecessary spread of flu and infection. For students studying abroad for the entire semester, please consult with the Student Life staff upon arrival at the site for specific guidelines as not all of the following will apply.

First, if you have flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, body aches) before coming to campus for the start of classes, please wait until you are fever free (at rest, temperature less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit) for at least 24 hours before arriving. Please e-mail advisement.provost@nyu.edu to advise us that you will be arriving late and this office will notify your academic advisers about any absences from orientation activities or classes. If you are living in the residence hall, your assignment will be secured by emailing housing@nyu.edu from your NYUHome account with the subject line "DELAYED CHECK-IN" about your illness and anticipated move-in date.

Second, if you have any chronic illnesses such as asthma or diabetes, please make sure that you discuss with your personal health professional any precautions that you might need to take prior to coming to campus. You can also call to discuss your concerns with a NYU Student Health Center (SHC) clinician at 212-443-1000.

- All students, whether living in NYU Housing or off campus, should also consider preparing a "stay at home kit" with over the counter items such as a thermometer, fever reducing medicine (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, but not aspirin), surgical masks (to be used when ill and in shared space environments), Gatorade and other electrolyte type drinks, and a few nonperishable food items such as protein bars, and soups. Although the University will provide food and other supplies to ill students living in NYU Housing (see section below "Where Can You Go To Get Help If You Are Sick With the Flu?"), it is always good to be prepared.

- If you get sick during the semester, please stay in your residence hall room if you live on campus, or apartment/house if you live off campus; stay away from class and other public areas until you are fever free for 24 hours. Contact a friend, parent, or a resident assistant (RA) if you live in NYU Housing, so that someone knows you are ill and how that person can assist you.
- Students living in residence halls who are from the local area are advised to return home to recover from their illness until they are fever free and able to return to campus.
- Call the NYU Student Health Center if you need any advice or have any concerns at 212-443-1000.
- If you are ill, your instructors are being asked to be flexible in their approach to student absences because of the flu. This self-isolation will give your body time to recuperate and will help prevent the unnecessary spread of the flu to others.

- How Will You Know If You Have the Flu?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines flu-like illness this way: A fever of 100.4F or greater, plus a cough or sore throat and possibly other symptoms like runny nose, body aches, headaches, chills, fatigue, vomiting or diarrhea. Fever is often a key factor, although it is not always present with H1N1 flu. If you have the other symptoms listed but have no fever, call your personal health professional or the NYU Student Health Center for advice.

- Where Can You Go To Get Help If You Are Sick With the Flu?

You may not need to see a health professional if your symptoms are mild. When in doubt, call your personal health professional or call the NYU Student Health Center at 212-443-1000 or consult the SHC website at <http://www.nyu.edu/shc> for the latest advice and guidance. The vast majority of people who become ill have mild to moderate severity and recover fully in a week or less, without any medical intervention. However, if you are ill with flu and are pregnant or have any chronic illness, please call your personal health professional or the Student Health Center right away.

If you miss class because you are ill, please contact your instructors directly to request an accommodation. In addition, please also notify your academic adviser. If this is not possible, you may contact advisement.provost@nyu.edu for assistance.

If you become ill with flu and are staying in NYU residence halls, the University will make arrangements to provide food for you in your room. Residence hall staff will be checking on students regularly and transportation to the NYU Student Health Center will be made available for those who require an assessment but cannot get there under their own power. Always call the Student Health Center first when you have a concern. However, if you are having trouble breathing, or have severe symptoms, call 911 or NYU Public Safety (212-998-2222) for immediate assistance.

- How Can I Decrease My Chances of Getting Flu?

The best way to stay healthy is to wash your hands often and vigorously for 30 seconds with soap and water, cough or sneeze into a tissue, or if not available, into your elbow or sleeves BUT NOT into your hands. Keep your hands away from your face. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol are also effective when soap and water are not immediately available, especially prior to eating, or after shaking hands or touching high traffic and high usage hard surfaces (phones, computer keyboards, etc). While you can count on NYU to be vigilant in keeping high traffic areas clean, it is important that each student take precautions to increase our ability to reduce the spread of germs and flu.

We expect seasonal influenza vaccine to become available in mid to late September and will inform the NYU student community on how to obtain a vaccination. Similarly, when H1N1 vaccine becomes available (although delays are anticipated), students will also be notified.

Stay informed by checking the Student Health Center website at <http://www.nyu.edu/shc/flu> regularly for advice and updates as we expect that public health guidance will be updated and summarized regularly for the NYU community.

Our best wishes for a successful academic year,

Linda Mills
Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and University Life

Henry Chung, M.D.
Associate Vice President, Student Health

Additional resources:

Information on the NYU response to the flu:
<http://www.nyu.edu/shc/about/news-swineflu.html>

Information on the flu from U.S. health officials:
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

Recommendations for colleges and universities:
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools>

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