

Dear UW-L Campus Community,

Welcome back to the start of a new and exciting academic year. As noted at the Chancellor's welcome on Wednesday, there are many exciting things happening on campus this year! There are also a few anticipated challenges for us to address.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. government have asked college campuses to prepare for an elevated return of the H1N1 virus this fall. We'd like to provide an update on the virus as well as our efforts to manage the spread of this virus.

Novel H1N1 (referred to as "swine flu" early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. The spread of novel H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus in people include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Illness with the new H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people who have been sick have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and death have occurred from this infection.

About 70 percent of people who have been hospitalized with this novel H1N1 virus have had one or more medical conditions previously recognized as placing people at "high risk" of serious seasonal flu-related complications. This includes pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.

People infected with the H1N1 flu virus may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems.

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against the H1N1 virus. However, an H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public this fall.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. [Alcohol-based hand cleaners](#)\* are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- If you are sick with flu-like illness, [CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone](#) except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

We are planning an educational campaign with the start of the semester to minimize the impact of this virus. We need people to “Be Honest”. If you are experiencing the symptoms noted above, please stay or go home. We need everyone to “Be Responsible”. Take the precautions noted above: carry a hand sanitizer, get the seasonal flu and H1N1 vaccination, think twice about what you touch, and build flexibility into your fall schedule. Finally, “Be Healthy”. We’re fortunate that this is proving not to be as violent a virus as originally thought. It is, however, highly contagious. Let’s work together to minimize the spread and to help our community stay healthy!

We have created an H1N1 website ( <http://www.uwlax.edu/sdas/H1N1.htm> ) to help keep you informed. I encourage you to explore the links, educational poster, and the entertaining video on how to cough to minimize the spread of germs. We will be monitoring the virus as we move through the year and encourage you to contact us if you have questions or concerns.

Be well,

Scott Rohde  
Chief of Police

Brian Allen, D.O.  
Director, Student Health Center

Paula M. Knudson, Ph.D.  
Assistant Chancellor &  
Dean of Students