

H1N1 FLU F.A.Q

Your best defense against H1N1 Flu is to stay informed. This guide was developed to answer commonly asked questions about H1N1. For updated FAQs and campus health information, go to wellness.tulane.edu.

What is H1N1 Flu?

H1N1 flu, is a new type A influenza virus that spreads from person to person and causes illness in people. In the past it was also called swine flu because the virus has some genes of flu viruses that normally infect pigs. Further laboratory studies now show that the H1N1 virus has genes of flu viruses that also normally infect birds and humans. Therefore, the best name for this flu virus is just H1N1.

Will my regular seasonal flu shot protect me from H1N1?

No, the vaccine formulated for the 2008-2009 flu season was not developed for H1N1 Flu. You should still get your regular seasonal flu shot from the Student Health Center in September. When a vaccine for H1N1 becomes available it will be offered through the Student Health Center. Check wellness.tulane.edu for updates and information.

How can I prevent getting or spreading H1N1 flu?

H1N1 flu virus, like other influenza viruses is mainly spread through coughing and sneezing, touching objects that have been contaminated with the virus, and spreading the virus by not washing your hands often and appropriately.

To protect yourself and prevent the spread of H1N1 and the regular seasonal flu take the following action steps

- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. It is best to cough or sneeze into your sleeve. If you must use a tissue throw it away immediately and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. While alcohol-based hand cleaners help, hand washing is by far the best way to prevent the spread from person to person. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way. For example, if David coughs in his hand then opens the door to the LBC, the LBC door is now contaminated. If you follow behind him and then use your hand to scratch your eye, you've potentially exposed yourself to flu virus.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. If your roommate is sick, be sure they follow the self-isolation guidelines for people with flu and the guidelines for roommates available on wellness.tulane.edu.

What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1 flu?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu in people are similar to those of regular seasonal influenza in humans. They include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.

What should you do if you think you have these symptoms?

If you think you are experiencing these symptoms, call the Student Health Center at 504-865-5255. There are also online screening tools available at wellness.tulane.edu.

How do I know I have the H1N1 Flu?

The Student Health Center will do special laboratory testing to determine if indeed you have H1N1. However, in the mean time, follow all the recommended actions to protect yourself and others

Are treatments available?

There are prescription medicines, called anti-viral drugs, which help keep the H1N1 virus from producing in the body. ; These medications are particularly helpful for persons at high risk of developing severe disease. If you are diagnosed with H1N1 Flu, the Student Health Center will provide you with any necessary treatments.

I'm worried or scared I'm going to get sick.

It is understandable that some might feel anxious or scared during this time, that's why it is so important to stay informed! However, you should feel safe in knowing that Tulane University has a task force monitoring H1N1 and is prepared to deal with whatever issues arise-- <http://www.sph.tulane.edu/flu/index.htm>. The Student Health Center staff is trained and fully prepared to deal with the H1N1 influenza. You can contact the Student Health Center ((504) 865-5255; askshc@tulane.edu) to get more specific questions answered. We are here to help and support you.

Should I stay in my room if I have the flu?

If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms you should go home or to your room for bed rest (just like you would for seasonal flu). It is important to limit your contact with other people to prevent others from becoming ill. Stay away from classes and limit interactions with other people, except to seek medical care. Call the Student Health Center immediately.

If you live within driving distance of campus (1 day or less), consider contacting your family to drive you home until you are well.

How long should I stay home and rest?

You should remain home and avoid contact with others until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever.

What should I do if my roommate has the flu?

If your roommate has flu-like symptoms, don't panic. Monitor your health and continue to go to class and interact with others as long as you do not experience symptoms. When you are in your room, remember to wash your hands often, and clean surfaces that your roommate may have touched. Try and maintain at least a 6-foot distance from your roommate, especially when sleeping. Also, assist your roommate by bringing them meals, class notes, or other necessary items while they are ill. More information on dealing with a roommate's flu is available online at wellness.tulane.edu. The Student Health Center will help you take all actions to stay healthy.

If I have the flu and I am in bed, how do I get meals and class notes?

Ask a friend or your roommate to be a "flu buddy." Identify someone to bring you meals and class notes. Interact with your professors and instructors via email, phone and/or text message to determine the best way for you to keep up with coursework. Many faculty members will have class notes, lectures and homework assignments available on Blackboard. If you need assistance in obtaining meals or other necessary items while ill, contact your RA for help.

I am experiencing some of the flu symptoms and I have a date or a game tonight. What should I do?

If you are beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, you should cancel any planned social activities. To prevent the spread of the flu it is important that you avoid contact with others; this includes social functions such as dates, parties, athletic events, movies, and other gatherings of people.

Tulane University Flu Resources
Student Health Center: 504-865-5255
wellness.tulane.edu