

Dear Miami Students, Faculty, Staff and Parents,

It has been a month since Miami University's Oxford campus first had a report of suspected H1N1 illness by a student. This is an update on our activities and observations.

Recent experience emphasizes that it is extra important for people with chronic conditions who develop the flu to seek medical help. Overall, we have seen decreasing numbers of students at the Student Health Service with flu or flu-like illness in the last 10 days. This may be due to two possible reasons: the initial spread of the disease has slowed because students are using good prevention or students are self-isolating and self-managing the illness in their rooms or apartments and we are not seeing them at the Student Health Service. So, while the impact of the H1N1 virus has slowed, it is important for all students, faculty and staff to practice good prevention.

Campuswide there have been several actions to deal with H1N1 virus. Housing, Dining and Guest Services revised its "under the weather" meal policy to make it easier for students to get meals for other students. Hand sanitizer stations have been distributed at the entrances to residence and dining halls as well as in computer labs. The Provost has provided guidance to faculty on dealing with absenteeism in the classroom. The Parents Office in the Division of Student Affairs has included information for parents in the Parent Newsletter. The Student Health Service has modified some appointment schedules to handle the increase in sick students using our service. The Office of Health Education has initiated a large H1N1 prevention campaign, in collaboration with the Office of Residence Life. The Health Emergency Planning Task Force has been meeting and has prepared a revised Health Emergency response plan for the President's Executive Council. When that plan is finalized, it will be posted on the SHS website.

As you have probably heard, the H1N1 vaccine has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration and we anticipate being able to administer the vaccine in mid-October. H1N1 vaccine will be administered according to CDC guidelines, so please watch the Miami e-Report and the SHS Web site for updated information about when and where H1N1 vaccines will be given. Currently we are administering seasonal flu vaccine to students at the Student Health Service. Faculty and staff flu shot clinics for seasonal flu vaccine are scheduled for September 29 on the Hamilton campus, September 30 on the Middletown campus and Oct. 5 on the Oxford campus (details available from Employee Health and Well Being).

Miami University continues to follow the CDC guidelines for dealing with H1N1 events on college campuses and as the information from the CDC changes, it will be posted on the Student Health Service Web site. H1N1 virus likely will be present on campus throughout fall and much of second semester and everyone can help reduce the risk of having and spreading the flu. Here are a few things you can do to help:

- **Practice good hand hygiene** by washing your hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** A fever is a temperature of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius. Look for possible signs of fever such as when a person feels very warm, has a flushed appearance or is sweating or shivering. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.

- **Stay home if you have flu or flu-like illness for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever** (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). The flu may last up to 7 days. Don't go to class or work if you're ill. Ask a friend to bring meals to your room.

It is important for students who have temperatures of at least 102 degrees Fahrenheit or 38.8 degrees Celsius with a cough and/or sore throat to call the Student Health Service for an appointment (529-3000) to see a clinician. Students who have flu symptoms but also have chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, or heart problems also should call for an appointment.

Again, the university will monitor this closely and make pertinent information available as we receive it. We strongly recommend that students and parents monitor the Student Health Service Web site, [muohio.edu/health](http://muohio.edu/health). A Frequently Asked Questions document is among information you can click on for details.

If this year's flu season becomes more severe, we may take the following additional steps to prevent the spread of the virus:

- **Allow students, faculty, and staff at higher risk for complications to stay home.** These students, faculty, and staff should make this decision in consultation with their health care provider.
- **Find ways to increase social distances** (the space between people) in classrooms such as moving desks farther apart, leaving empty seats between students, holding outdoor classes, and using distance learning methods.
- **Extend the time sick students, faculty, or staff stay home or in their residence.** During severe flu conditions sick people should stay home for at least 7 days, even if they feel better sooner. Those who are still sick after 7 days should continue to stay home until at least 24 hours after symptoms have gone away. Symptoms of flu include fever or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- **Suspend classes.** This decision will be made together with local and state public health officials. The length of time classes should be suspended will depend on the goal of suspending classes as well as the severity and extent of illness.
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Students who are studying abroad should follow recommendations from the university at which they are studying and should visit [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) <<http://www.cdc.gov/travel>> for further health information while studying abroad. For the most up-to-date information on flu, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).

We will notify you of any additional changes to Miami's strategy to prevent the spread of flu on our campus.

Sincerely,

Gail Walenga  
Assistant Vice President, student health and wellness