

Electronic Flu-Kit

The information in this flu kit is adapted from the CDC Website: August 27, 2009 11:00 AM ET.

This kit will provide you with helpful information regarding the flu. If you are experiencing flu symptoms or know someone who is ill, the information here will help you care for yourself and others and prevent the spread of illness. If you have any questions about the flu or would like more information on the College's response to pandemic flu, please contact the Office of Health Promotion (wallwa@eckerd.edu or (727) 864- 8031).

Influenza Symptoms

Influenza (also known as the flu) is a contagious illness caused by flu viruses. The flu is different from a cold. The flu or influenza-like-illness (ILI) usually comes on suddenly and is defined as a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit) accompanied by some of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, also can occur but are more common in children than adults

These symptoms are usually referred to as "flu-like symptoms," "influenza like illness" or "ILI". Symptoms of the Novel H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) and the Seasonal Flu are similar. Most people recover from both without serious complications.

The Disease Is More Severe for Some

If you are pregnant or have a chronic medical condition (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease) it is important to contact your medical provider immediately if you experience influenza symptoms. To make an appointment with Eckerd College Health Services, call (727) 864-8326.

What to Do If You Get Flu-Like Symptoms

Send A Message to the College's Flu Alias

The Office of Health Promotion is tracking cases on campus and can also provide additional resources regarding flu prevention and treatment, as needed. Please send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) when you experience flu symptoms or call (727) 864-8031. Remember: Be sure to email your faculty, too, to make arrangements for missed class and your coursework.

Avoid Contact With Others

To prevent spreading the flu to others, please stay home and keep away from others as much as possible. If you live either on or off campus and have influenza like illness (ILI), you should self-isolate (i.e., stay away from others except to get medical care or for other necessities) in your dorm room or home for at least 24 hours after your fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit) is gone without the aid of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). You might want to ask a friend to pick up meals and other items for you, as needed. **As always, it is VERY important to contact your professors if you need to miss class due to illness.**

If you have ILI and must leave your home or dorm room (for example, to seek medical care or other necessities) you should cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. A surgical loose-fitting mask can be helpful, but a tissue or other covering is appropriate as well. If you would like a surgical mask to be delivered to your room, send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu)

Seek Medical Attention if Necessary

According to the CDC, it is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care. If you experience any of the following warning signs or if you are at high risk for flu complications, contact your health care provider or seek medical care.

Emergency Warning Signs

Emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Your health care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed. Be aware that if the flu becomes widespread, less testing may be needed, so your health care provider may decide not to test for the flu virus.

Antiviral drugs can be given to treat those who become severely ill with influenza. These antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) with activity against influenza viruses, including novel H1N1 flu virus. These medications must be prescribed by a health care professional.

Aspirin or aspirin-containing products (e.g., bismuth subsalicylate – Pepto Bismol) should not be used in individuals aged 18 years old and younger due to the risk of Reye's syndrome.

Practice Good Health Habits

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it and wash your hands.

Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

Take care of yourself. Rest as much as possible and drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, and sports drinks) to keep from being dehydrated

Over-the-counter cold and flu medications used according to the package instructions may help lessen some symptoms such as cough and congestion.

Stay Informed

Eckerd College will continuously provide information regarding flu prevention, treatment, and response. Be sure to check your campus email regularly for such communications. You can also stay informed by visiting the College's Pandemic Flu Webpage: www.eckerd.edu/health/flu

Eckerd College Health Services

(727) 864-8326 www.eckerd.edu/counselinghealth/health

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

- Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Available
- 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday

- Medical Assistant Available for Triage
- 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Appointments for Health Services

- Students may be seen by appointment: (727) 864-8326
- Bring insurance information and student id to appointment
- Walk-ins can be accommodated as time permits
- Immediate care available when urgent

After Hours Care

Skyway Family Practice, located at 1100 62nd Avenue South, St. Petersburg, 33705 is available for off hours/after hours care. Call (727) 866-3166.

Appointments are required to be seen at this location, as this is not a walk-in clinic.

Skyway Family Practice is open

Monday - 8am to 5pm
Tuesday - 8am to 6pm
Wednesday - 8am to 5pm
Thursday - 8am to 5pm
Friday - 8am to 4:15pm

Taxi transportation to Skyway Family Practice is available through Bat's Taxi Service at 727-367-3702. Taxi vouchers are available in Counseling & Health Services, the Office of the Dean of Students, and Campus Safety and Security, which allow students to charge transportation costs to their student account.

Students in need of assistance when the Health Services is closed should contact their Resident Advisors. In an extreme emergency, call 911 to activate Emergency Medical Services and contact Campus Safety at ext. 8260.

If you are experiencing symptoms of influenza, please provide your roommate(s) and/or housemate(s) with the following information and ask your roommate(s)/housemate(s) to send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) or call the Office of Health Promotion at (727) 864-8031.

What To Do If Your Roommate Has The Flu

Adapted From the CDC Interim Guidance for Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home

If your roommate or housemate has the flu, it is important to take steps to prevent the spread of illness. Also, certain groups might be more likely to develop a severe illness from season flu or the Novel H1N1 flu, such as pregnant women and persons with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease. If you are in one of these at-risk groups and your roommate/housemate is experiencing flu symptoms, please send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) or call (727) 864-8031.

How Flu Spreads

The main way that influenza viruses are thought to spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

Caring For Someone

Most people who have the flu recover completely without complications. However, if a roommate or housemate is experiencing flu symptoms, be watchful for emergency warning signs (below) that might indicate they need to seek medical attention.

Emergency Warning Signs include:

- Difficulty breathing or pain/pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Purple or blue discoloration in the lips
- Signs of dehydration: dizziness when standing or absence of urination
- Severe or persistent vomiting and unable to keep liquids down
- Seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions)
- Show signs of confusion or is less responsive than normal

Steps to Lessen the Spread of Flu in the Home

When a household member or roommate is sick with influenza, the most important ways to protect yourself and others who are not sick are to:

- Keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible especially others who are at high risk for complications from influenza
- Remind the sick person to cover their coughs and clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after coughing and/or sneezing
- Have everyone clean their hands often, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- If you are in a high risk group for complications from flu, you should avoid close contact with household members who are sick and send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) or call (727) 864-8031.

Disease Prevention Tips

- Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house if possible.
- Unless necessary for medical care or other necessities, people who are sick with an influenza-like-illness should stay home and keep away from others as much as possible for at least 24 hours after fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities.
- If persons with the flu need to leave the home (for example, for medical care or other necessities), they should cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- You may want to ask the sick person to wear a facemask in common areas such as a shared room or bathroom. To have a facemask delivered to your room, send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu).
- If possible, sick persons should use a separate bathroom.
- Use paper towels for drying hands after hand washing or dedicate cloth towels to each person in the household. For example, have different colored towels for each person.

If You Are the Caregiver

- Avoid being face-to-face with the sick person.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after you touch the sick person or handle used tissues, or laundry.
- If you are in a high risk group for complications from influenza, you should attempt to avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with household members who are sick with influenza. If you are at-risk for complications from influenza and your roommate is experiencing flu symptoms you should send a message to the Flu Alias (flu@eckerd.edu) or call (727) 864-8031.
- Monitor yourself and household members for flu symptoms and contact a telephone hotline or health care provider if symptoms occur.

Household Cleaning/Laundry/Waste Disposal

- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.
- Wash linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using household laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting. Avoid “hugging” laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating yourself. Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub right after handling dirty laundry.
- Eating utensils should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with hot water and soap.

For More Information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline (1-800-CDC-INFO) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Or, contact Eckerd’s Office of Health Promotion at (727) 864-8031.

Additional Flu Resources:

American College Health Association:

- http://www.acha.org/info_resources/pandemic_flu.cfm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>
- CDC guidance for Institutions of Higher Education:
http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/guidelines_colleges.htm

Federal Government Pandemic Flu Information Page

- <http://www.flu.gov>

Florida Department of Health

- <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/php/FluInfo.htm>

U.S. Department of Education (ED):

- Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS) issued guidance to educational institutions at the following websites:
- <http://www.edgovblogs.org/duncan/2009/04/public-health-officials-offer-swine-flu-guidance-to-schools/>
- <http://rems.ed.gov/index.cfm?event=PandemicPreparedns4Schools>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- <http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

- http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial_0760.shtm

World Health Organization

- <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Will the College test ill students for H1N1? Eckerd Health Services will follow CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines regarding testing. As of August 2009, CDC recommends testing for only unusual and/or severe cases. So, most individuals who are sick with influenza-like-illness will not know if they are sick with seasonal flu or the Novel H1N1 Influenza.

Q: Will the College isolate ill students who are living on campus? The College will follow guidance from the CDC and local health authorities regarding the isolation of ill students. At this time, the College will not isolate or quarantine students who experience/are exposed to influenza-like-illness. Since the Novel H1N1 Influenza is presenting like the seasonal flu and most people recover without complications, our main concern is keeping the students who are at-risk for flu complications (students who are pregnant or have chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes) as safe as possible. We may offer to temporarily relocate at-risk students, if appropriate, in areas where they will have single rooms and private bathrooms, decreasing their risk of exposure.

Q: Will the College provide students with antiviral medications?

Antiviral drugs, such as Tamiflu, are prescription medicines that can be used to treat influenza and lessen the severity of symptoms. Eckerd Health Services will follow CDC guidelines for use of these medicines; when medically indicated, Eckerd Health Services may write prescriptions for antiviral drugs. Currently, the CDC is recommending antiviral drugs primarily for hospitalized patients and patients who are at high risk for flu complications. At this time, most individuals who are sick with influenza-like-illness will not receive antiviral medications.

Q: Will the College serve as a site to dispense the vaccine against H1N1?

A vaccine to protect against H1N1 is currently in development, but not yet publicly available. Eckerd College is working with the Pinellas County Health Department to be able to dispense the vaccine on campus when it becomes available. If quantities are initially limited, the vaccine will be allocated according to CDC guidelines. More information on the H1N1 Vaccine will be sent to community as it becomes available. As always, the seasonal influenza vaccine will be available at Eckerd Health Services this fall. The seasonal influenza vaccine, while important, does not provide protection against H1N1 Influenza.

Q: What if I am going abroad?

College students participating in study abroad programs should be aware that each country has its own set of guidelines to follow regarding H1N1. Students should consult with their study-abroad program provider and check the program provider's Web site for information concerning H1N1. Information on Eckerd-sponsored programs is available through the Director of International Education, Diane Ferris (ferrisd@eckerd.edu). Most programs are providing students with precautionary information and advising students on what to do if they feel sick.