



East Carolina University

Student Health Service

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Dear Pirate Parents,

Unfortunately, as I am sure you are aware; there is an increase in flu activity on many campuses across the country. I would like to reassure you that much thought has gone into planning for an unusually high volume flu season here at East Carolina University.

As you may know, flu can be spread easily from person to person. Therefore, we are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu at ECU. Education has been made available to your students through programming, e-mails, Web sites and closed circuit TV.

We have asked your students to help us decrease the spread of influenza on our campus by:

- **Practicing good hand hygiene** by washing hands with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also are effective.
- **Practicing respiratory etiquette** by covering their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. If they don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into their sleeve or shoulder, not into their hands. Avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth; germs are spread this way.
- **Knowing the signs and symptoms of the flu**, which are sudden onset of fever, sore throat, aches and cough. A fever is a temperature taken with a thermometer that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. If students do not have a thermometer, signs of fever include feeling very warm, having a flushed appearance, or alternating sweating and shivering.
- **Staying home if flu or flu-like illness is present. They should stay home until they are fever-free for at least 24 hours** (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius). The fever should be gone without having to use fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen). Students who think they have flu should not go to class, work or social activities.
- **Considering receiving seasonal flu vaccine.** Preparations have been made to provide the regular seasonal flu vaccine in September (\$7.00 charge).

- **Consider receiving the H1N1 vaccine.** When it becomes available, the H1N1 vaccine will be provided free of charge according to the priority groups established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm.

In addition to regular office hours the Student Health Service provides an “after hours nurse line” to help your students determine what level of care they need and what self care might be appropriate.

I also encourage you to send to school with your students or have them purchase a thermometer and a small supply of over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or Advil to have on hand for fever and aches, as well as medication for runny nose and head congestion such as Dayquil and Nyquil. A supply of easily prepared food (soup, ramen noodles, etc.) and plenty of liquids would also be helpful for students to have readily available.

For more information about flu in our community and what our institution is doing, visit <http://www.ecu.edu/alert/>. Study-abroad students and their parents may view updated health information related to H1N1 and travel by visiting www.cdc.gov/travel.

For the most up-to-date information on flu, visit www.flu.gov, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

I have attached for your information a letter from the Office of the North Carolina Health Director to the University Health Care Providers that outlines the standard of care as it relates to the medical treatment of H1N1.

Again I hope the year brings good health to you and your students.

Sincerely,



Jolene C. Jernigan
Director



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
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Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

Jeffrey P. Engel, M.D.
State Health Director

August 28, 2009 (1 page)

To: College and University Health Care Providers
From: Megan Davies, MD, State Epidemiologist
Re: **Appropriate use of Antiviral Medications for Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) Virus**

Pandemic influenza A (H1N1) continues to cause illness around the world, particularly among children and young adults. In North Carolina, levels of influenza activity have remained above normal throughout the summer, and are expected to increase in fall. Clusters of influenza-like illness have already been reported in college and university settings.

In addition to early isolation of cases and other mitigation strategies, to protect students, staff, and the broader community during this academic year, the North Carolina Division of Public Health is providing the following guidance regarding use of antiviral medications in college and university settings:

Antiviral Medications for Treatment of Illness

- Antiviral treatment with either oseltamivir (Tamiflu[®]) or zanamivir (Relenza[®]) is recommended for all patients with confirmed or suspected cases of pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus infection who are *hospitalized* or who are *at higher risk for influenza complications*.
- Healthy patients with uncomplicated illness need not be treated with antivirals, and such treatment is not recommended by the CDC or WHO
- Antiviral medication for treatment may be obtained from the Local Health Department for those students who have no alternative means of obtaining it. This is an approved use of antivirals distributed through the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) in May, 2009.

Antiviral Medications for Prevention of Illness (Chemoprophylaxis)

- Antiviral medications should not be used for prevention of illness among healthy students or staff with known or suspected exposures to influenza
 - Antiviral chemoprophylaxis should be used judiciously to decrease opportunities for development of antiviral resistance.
- Use of antiviral medications for post-exposure chemoprophylaxis can be considered for persons at higher risk for influenza-related complications.
 - Emphasis on early treatment is an alternative to post-exposure chemoprophylaxis and might reduce opportunities for development of oseltamivir resistance.

Complete CDC recommendations regarding antiviral treatment and chemoprophylaxis are available at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm. Current information about flu activity in North Carolina is available at www.flu.nc.gov.

All colleges and universities are encouraged to work closely with local health departments in order to prevent the spread of influenza. Self-isolation of ill persons, good hand and respiratory hygiene, and vaccination (when available) should be the cornerstones of strategies to prevent transmission of influenza. Detailed guidance and communication materials for colleges and universities are available at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/institutions/toolkit.



North Carolina Public Health
Working for a healthier and safer North Carolina
Everywhere. Everyday. Everybody.



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