

**Manhattan College Health Services  
H1N1 Flu Management Notice**

**Subject: H1N1 Flu – Questions & Answers**

**August 26, 2009**  
(H1N1 FMN 02/09)

Students, Parents, Faculty & Staff :

Manhattan College is committed to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. College Health Services developed this FAQ to educate and assist students, parents, faculty and staff in protecting themselves and others from the threat of H1N1 (Swine) flu. These recommendations are consistent with current information provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Department of Health and the New York City Department of Health.

**1. What is H1N1 flu?**

H1N1 is a new influenza (flu) virus first seen in the United States in April 2009. It is called "novel" H1N1 because the virus has never been identified before and is new. Novel H1N1 was initially called "swine flu" by health officials because many of the genes are similar to some flu viruses that pigs in North America can get. As health officials learn more about this flu virus, they continue to identify it more accurately. As a result, you may hear or see it called by different names, including "novel H1N1 influenza (flu) virus," "H1N1 influenza (flu) virus" or "novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection." These are all describing this same, newly seen influenza virus in people. The word "novel" indicates that this is a new influenza virus with a gene combination that has not been seen before.

**2. Is this new H1N1 flu the same as seasonal flu?**

No. Seasonal flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by human influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death. Human flu viruses change a little bit every year, which is why people can get sick from the flu more than once. It is also why a new flu vaccine is produced each year; the vaccine must be made to protect against the particular viruses circulating that year.

**3. How is H1N1 flu virus spread?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined the H1N1 virus spreads in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Coughs and sneezes spread respiratory droplets through the air and deposit 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. H1N1 is believed to live on surfaces for eight hours.

**4. How long after exposure do symptoms occur?**

Because this is a new virus, it is not known how long it takes for symptoms to appear after exposure. It could range from one to-seven days and is more likely one to four days.

**5. What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1?**

The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of regular flu and include a fever of 100°F or higher, cough or sore throat.

**6. How long can an infected person spread this new H1N1 flu to others?**

People with H1N1 flu infection may be contagious from one day before they develop symptoms up to 10 days or longer following illness onset. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

### **7. Can H1N1 be treated?**

Yes. At this time H1N1 virus is susceptible to certain antiviral drugs used to treat flu infections. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started as soon as possible after getting sick (within two days of symptoms). Health Services at Manhattan College or your health care provider can prescribe antiviral medication.

### **8. Can students be tested for H1N1 on campus?**

Yes. Health Services can send a test to a laboratory, if indicated.

### **9. Is there a vaccine against the H1N1 flu virus?**

At this time, the H1N1 vaccine is still in production. Distribution of H1N1 vaccine will most likely require 2 doses spaced 30 days apart. The seasonal influenza vaccine does not provide protection against H1N1 flu.

### **10. If I get a flu shot in the fall, will I be protected from H1N1?**

Currently, there is no vaccine for H1N1. However, the Health services plans to offer a flu shot in the fall. The CDC will determine what flu strains are covered in the shot.

### **11. What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?**

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these steps to protect your health:

- Avoid close contact (within six feet) with sick people as much as possible
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Hand sanitizers (rubs) that are 60 percent alcohol based are also effective
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue if you cough or sneeze or sneeze or cough into your sleeve
- Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it and wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- Eat a well balanced diet
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco and other substances that weaken the immune system
- Get eight hours of sleep each night
- Exercise daily
- Limit stress

### **12. What should students do if they have flu-like symptoms or are diagnosed with H1N1 flu?**

- Students should contact Health Services or their doctors for recommendations if they develop flu-like illnesses
- If a student develops an influenza-like illness (ILI) or is diagnosed with H1N1 flu, he/she should stay home and limit contact with others as much as possible
- Students should call Health Services if they are diagnosed with H1N1
- Students with flu like illness should not walk into Health Services for care. They should call for more information. This will keep students with flu like illness away from students seeking care for other conditions
- Unless necessary for medical care, students should stay home. If they must be in a public place, they should make the time they spend in crowded settings as short as possible
- Rest, drink plenty of clear fluids and take medications typically used to treat flu-like symptoms, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Students should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Promptly throw the tissue into the trash and wash hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid having visitors. If visitors must enter your home, they should avoid close contact with you
- Stay home, remain out of school, work, sports and community activities until you have been fever free for at least 24 hours without using fever reducing medicines. A fever is define as 100°F or 37.8°C
- Upon returning to full activity follow all infection control strategies including covering your cough, frequent handwashing, social distancing and not sharing personal care items and food for at least 10 days

**13. What precautions and steps should students take if they live with someone with confirmed H1N1 influenza or are sick with a flu-like illness?**

- If a student is taking care of someone with H1N1 flu, speak with a health care provider if prescription antiviral medication might be appropriate
- If possible, place the person with H1N1 in a separate room, away from the common areas of the house or apartment. Respiratory treatments, such as inhalers and nebulizers, should be used by the ill person in a separate room away from common areas of the house when possible
- Limit your contact with the sick person. Avoid close contact such as kissing and do not share towels, drinking glasses, eating utensils or toothbrushes with the ill person
- All household members, ill and well, should regularly wash their hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- Provide disposable tissues to ill persons to use to cover their mouth and nose whenever they sneeze, cough or blow their nose. Make sure they immediately throw their used tissues in a nearby wastebasket or trash receptacle. Both ill and well persons should wash their hands or use an alcohol-based hand rub after touching used tissues, similar waste and after emptying wastebaskets or trash receptacles
- Avoid having visitors. If visitors must enter the home, they should avoid close contact with the sick person
- The dirty dishes, eating utensils, and laundry of the ill person do not need to be washed separately from other members of the household. Use detergent and wash as usual
- Students should monitor themselves closely for the development of illness. If they develop influenza-like illness (ILI), for example fever, sore throat, and/or cough, they should stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours or longer without using fever reducing medicines

**14. Can household cleaning help prevent transmission?**

Yes. To help prevent transmission, students should frequently clean touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, refrigerator handle, toilet seat and handle, desks, chairs, keyboards, cell phones, etc. with a standard household disinfectant. If surfaces are visibly dirty, use a household cleaner first, then a disinfectant. Wash your hands with soap and water after cleaning surfaces and items.