

September 4, 2009

Dear Winter Term Students,

We write to update you on the University's interventions regarding the H1N1 flu virus (also known as swine flu). As you prepare to travel this Winter Term, it is important you take an active role in educating yourselves about the current status of H1N1 influenza in your off-campus program destination, communicate with your faculty leaders and host organizations regarding current travel, treatment and precautionary recommendations, and take measures to stay healthy. You are also encouraged to consult your U.S. physician about your travel plans.

For many years, DePauw has had emergency plans in place to address wide-ranging campus issues and health concerns. We have extended these preparedness efforts in order to respond to the H1N1 pandemic. Our emergency response teams receive regular input from the Putnam County Health Department and include members from Health Services, Student Life, Academic Affairs, the Department of Public Safety, Emergency Management and many others. Our general Pandemic Plan can be accessed via the web: <http://www.depauw.edu/student/emergency/Pandemic-AvianInfluenzaResponse.asp>. Additional information can be found on the Wellness Center website: <http://www.depauw.edu/student/health/influenza%20info.asp>.

The H1N1 pandemic flu is widespread throughout the world. Fortunately, the vast majority of cases are mild and, at this point, the H1N1 virus appears no more virulent or severe than most seasonal flus. This strain does seem to be more frequent in children and young adults.

Cases of H1N1 have already appeared on many college campuses, however we have not had a positive case yet at DePauw. We should expect to see cases this fall, and strongly encourage all members of the DePauw community to take the standard precautions adopted during the flu season-and to play an active role in our public health prevention efforts.

On-Campus Classes and Activities

Classes and other activities at DePauw will continue as scheduled this semester. The emergency response teams will monitor the campus situation, working with the Putnam County Health Department, and make recommendations regarding changes in or cancellations of campus activities on the basis of any flu outbreak. The Administration will make any decisions regarding the cancellation of classes or other activities. Any such decision will be communicated broadly to faculty, students and staff through email and other communications.

Public Health Precautions

It is important for all faculty, staff, and students to take the following flu/respiratory disease precautions:

- Avoid contact with ill persons
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Throw used tissues in the trash
- Do not share food, drink, or utensils
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently-particularly after you sneeze-or use an alcohol-based hand gel / sanitizer.

Treatment and Response

The majority of individuals who contract this virus will NOT need to seek a doctor's treatment. Faculty and staff who are ill with flu should remain at home and students who are ill with the flu should remain in their room for 24 hours after they are fever-free to limit the spread of the virus. A mild, lingering cough may occur. Barring any other flu symptoms, this cough should not prevent students from returning to class or employees to work. Employees should refer to the Sick Time Policy which can be found in the Employee Guide.

If you have been in contact with someone who has the flu, onset of the virus can take up to three days. If you experience any flu symptoms within this time period, please stay home to limit the spread of the virus. If you are pregnant or if you have a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, cancer, asthma, heart or lung problems, or a weakened immune system, you should consult with your physician or if you are a student with campus health services to see if Tamiflu is needed.

Medication and Vaccinations

Generally, Tamiflu is prescribed for individuals with flu who are either hospitalized, have a chronic medical condition (as listed above), or have a suppressed immune system. Tamiflu for influenza is not a cure and only reduces symptoms and decreases length of recovery time by about 24 hours.

The following vaccinations are expected to be available fall 2009:

- *Seasonal Flu Vaccine*: We expect to have a supply of the seasonal flu vaccine by early October.
- *H1N1 Vaccine*: Recent recommendations from the CDC have placed individuals under age 24 in the top priority group for receiving the H1N1 vaccine. For current information about the availability of vaccines, please see the information on the Health Services Web site: http://www.depauw.edu/student/health/documents/H1N1_flu.pdf.

Off-Campus Travel

To reduce the spread of the flu, airport staff in many countries monitor the health of arriving passengers. According to an announcement by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/content/news-announcements/delays-H1N1-screening.aspx>, as a traveler on a flight from the United States, you may be asked to:

- Pass through a scanning device that checks your temperature. (The device may look like an airport metal detector, a camera, or another handheld device.)
- Have your temperature taken with an oral or ear thermometer.
- Fill out a sheet of questions about your health.
- Review information about the symptoms of H1N1 flu.
- Provide your address, phone number, and other contact information for where you will be residing abroad. (We encourage you to have your program's main office and housing contact information available in your carry-on bags.)
- Be quarantined for a period of time if a passenger on your flight is found to have symptoms of H1N1 flu.
- Contact health authorities in the country you are visiting if they become ill.

Additionally, if you have a fever or respiratory symptoms or are suspected to have H1N1 flu based on screening, you may be required to:

- Be isolated from other people until you are well;
- Have a medical examination;
- Take a rapid flu test (which consists of a nasal swab sample);
- Be hospitalized and given medical treatment, if you test positive for H1N1 flu.

If you become ill while traveling abroad, you can call AIG WorldRisk for advice as to where to seek medical attention (*please refer to your Off-Campus Orientation Manual for contact information*). Should a flu outbreak occur at your program site, we will work with you and your off-campus study program to ensure that academic requirements are met. Students traveling domestically should work through their personal insurance provider.

In preparation for travel during Winter Term, it is advisable students acquire traveler's insurance in the event their course is cancelled due to H1N1, they are unable to participate due to illness, or they are not permitted to enter the host destination. All applicable Withdrawal and Refund policies will apply; be sure to familiarize yourself with them.

Additional Information

More information on the H1N1 flu is available on the following Web sites:

- World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/en/>.
- US Centers for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.
- US Department of Agriculture: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>.
- US State Department: <http://www.state.gov/>.
- DePauw Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness: <http://www.depauw.edu/student/emergency/>
- DePauw Wellness Center: <http://www.depauw.edu/student/health/wellnesscenter/>

Students and parents who have questions may contact the Wellness Center (765) 658-4555.

Thank you for your efforts to keep all members of the DePauw Community in good health. Although we can't eliminate the spread of this virus, our collective efforts can significantly minimize its reach and overall impact.

Sincerely,
Kate Knaul
Director, Center for International & Experiential Education