

**ASU Q&A on H1N1 Influenza A virus (also known as Swine Flu)**  
**Last updated – 10/21/2009 @ 4:52 p.m.**

**Is ASU offering H1N1 vaccinations for students, faculty and staff?**

ASU has received 50 doses of H1N1 vaccine from the Arizona Department of Health Services and is awaiting the rest of its allotment through the Maricopa County Health Department. There is a plan in place to notify students, faculty and staff as the supplies arrive. As supply comes in from the county health department, we will be distributing the vaccine in a prioritized manner according to federal, state and county guidance. There will be a \$10 standard administrative charge for administering the vaccine, which can be charged to a student account.

**Updated- 9/30/2009 @ 9 p.m.**

**Are the H1N1 vaccines safe?**

The 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine is expected to have a similar safety profile as seasonal flu vaccines, which have a very good safety track record. [Read More...](#)

**ASU Q&A on H1N1 Influenza A virus (also known as Swine Flu)**  
**Last updated- 9/21/2009 @ 12 p.m.**

**Is there any new information on the H1N1 Vaccine?**

The federal government is planning to distribute the H1N1 vaccine to the states by mid-October. Although the initial allotment will be targeted to high-risk groups - pregnant patients, infants, young children, those caring for infants, health-care workers and patients with chronic heart and lung disease -it is anticipated that the rest of the vaccine will be available for others by November or December.

**How much will the vaccine cost?**

Pricing for the H1N1 vaccine has not yet been set.

**How many shots will a person need to be protected?**

According to the testing, one dose of flu vaccine will be enough to build up protective antibodies to the virus.

**Do I have to get a H1N1 as a shot?**

We understand that the vaccine will come in both an injection form and a form inhaled through the nose. If the H1N1 vaccine is similar to the seasonal flu virus vaccine, the nasal vaccine will be a live-attenuated virus and thus would not be appropriate for people over 50 years old, or with a lowered immune system, chronic heart, lung, kidney disease or asthma.

**Will ASU require faculty, staff, or students to get the seasonal or H1N1 vaccines?**

No. The University has no plans at this time to require its faculty, students or staff to get either vaccination. Current federal and state guidance has not stated that they would require the H1N1 vaccination. ASU will continue to recommend that all high-risk students, faculty and staff get vaccinated.

**Are the seasonal and H1N1 vaccines safe?**

This vaccine was tested in the U.S. and in Australia to determine safety and efficacy to develop protective antibodies. The majority of reactions to the H1N1 vaccine seem to be the same as the seasonal flu vaccine with local injection site pain.

**I have heard concerns about the previous swine flu and adjuvants (an additive) and preservatives in the vaccine causing problems. What is the scientific data?**

Some groups have pointed to the 1970s swine flu vaccine that did produce a reversible neurologic illness called Guillain-Barre Syndrome while others have said that the use of additives and preservatives like squalene and thiomersal should be reasons to avoid the vaccine.

The federal government has learned a great deal from the 1970s swine-flu vaccine program. Strict testing measures and monitoring systems have been instituted for those receiving the vaccine. Despite the many websites describing various side effects and relationships to neurological and behavioral disorders when using thiomersal, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control both have clearly stated there is no scientific evidence behind any of these claims. [Read more...](#)

In addition, there are no current plans to actually use an adjuvant (additive) - squalene - in the H1N1 vaccine according to CDC Chief Scientific Officer Dr. Anne Suchat. The World Health Organization found that in more than 22 million doses of vaccines containing squalene, no significant side effects were found. [Read more...](#)

In the case of H1N1 influenza, the number of current hospitalizations and deaths due to H1N1 in young people far outweigh any perceived, but so far not scientifically-based, claims.

## **ASU Q&A on H1N1 Influenza A virus (also known as Swine Flu)** **Updated- 8/13/2009 @ 12 p.m.**

### **What is H1N1 Influenza A virus?**

This H1N1 flu virus is a group of influenza type A viruses that normally cause flu in pigs. This is a novel strain of a H1N1 virus; it has parts developed from birds and swine. The virus can be passed from human to human like the normal flu. It is not part of the H5N1 viruses that cause severe disease.

### **What are the symptoms?**

The early symptoms are similar to seasonal flu - cough, fever, sore throat, headache, runny nose, general fatigue, and muscle pains. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been noted. In some cases the flu has led to a pneumonia-like illness with difficulty breathing and even death.

### **Is this H1N1 flu a severe illness?**

Most cases in the United States to date have been mild. As it is in most flu diseases, those who are at highest risk for severe disease are the elderly or very young under 5 years old, those with lung or heart problems, or those who are immuno-compromised (for example patients with AIDS or taking medications that lower the immune system like cancer drugs). In addition, people who are pregnant have been found to be at increased risk.

### **How is this H1N1 flu spreading?**

The H1N1 virus is most likely spreading from person to person through infectious respiratory droplets (droplets generated when a person coughs or sneezes). It is possible that direct contact with infectious material by shaking hands with those who have coughed into their hands can transmit the flu virus.

### **How can I prevent getting sick?**

- Be sure to wash your hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand cleaner or soap and water for 15 seconds.
- Avoid people who are obviously sick and advise them to be seen at the ASU Health Services or their primary care clinician.
- Avoid touching your face, and if you do, be sure your hands are clean.
- Sneeze or cough into your shirt sleeve rather than your hands. Although this may not protect you, it may help protect others you care about.

### **What should I do if I get sick?**

If you have mild symptoms of flu and are not pregnant, have no heart, lung or other serious condition, and are not elderly, you can stay at home, take over the counter pain relievers like ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or cough medicines/anti-diarrhea medication.

Avoid contact with large groups by staying home or in your residence hall room until you are better (meaning you have not had a fever of greater than 100 degrees for more than 24 hours and have not been taking fever reducing medication for the same time period) or your primary care clinician tells you that you are no longer infectious to others. If you live in the residence halls, let your community assistant know that you are sick so that they can assist you and protect others from getting sick.

- You should be seen by one of the four ASU Health Service locations or your primary care clinician for treatment that can be effective in preventing more serious complications if you are/have:
  - symptoms not typical of flu
  - more than mildly ill (shortness of breath, uncontrolled diarrhea lasting more than 24 hours, feeling dizzy when you get up, very high uncontrollable fevers)
  - elderly or very young under age 5
  - have any chronic heart, lung, or immuno-compromising (poor immune system) conditions, or are pregnant
  
- If you are seriously ill, call 911.

### **What is the infectious period?**

The infectious period for this strain is not yet known. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, infected people should be considered potentially contagious:

One day before their symptoms start,

Seven days after their symptoms start OR as long as they are still showing symptoms (whichever is longer).

Note: Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

### **If I was exposed, how long would it be until I would know I was sick?**

Although we are not sure of the exact time for this version of the flu, the majority of patients develop symptoms within about four days. However, for this new strain of flu, the incubation period may be longer and the CDC and ASU Health Services are asking you to monitor your health for seven days after possible exposure.

### **Is there a vaccine?**

Many companies are working on developing a H1N1 vaccine, and safety testing is currently taking place. Based on CDC information, a vaccine may be available to targeted groups by mid-October. The target groups are people under 25; those who provide care for the very young or very old; healthcare workers and emergency service workers and patients with chronic heart, lung, or other immuno-compromised conditions. ASU Health Services will continue to work with federal, state, and county authorities to access this vaccine when it becomes available.

As a general good health practice, people should make sure all of their routine vaccinations are up to date. This includes the seasonal flu shot for all adults and the pneumococcal vaccination for certain adults. The pneumococcal vaccine is usually recommended for all people over 65 years old and younger people with serious long-term health problems (heart disease, diabetes, alcoholism, COPD, emphysema, asthma, cancer treatment, HIV/AIDS).

### **Should students/employees come in to be vaccinated against seasonal flu?**

Yes, all students and employees should be vaccinated against seasonal flu. ASU Health Services currently has seasonal flu vaccine available and will be offering it to employees and students. On the Tempe campus, clinics will be held during Welcome Week, Sept. 14-18 and Sept. 28-Oct. 2 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. in front of the health center. More information will be available soon about flu clinics on the Downtown, Polytechnic, and West campuses.

### **Can H1N1 flu be treated with antiviral medications?**

Yes, however, the new CDC recommendations state that treatment with antiviral medications should be given for those who are experiencing more than mild illness and those at high risk of complications.

Prophylactic treatment is not needed for individuals who have no symptoms unless they are both at high risk and they have very close prolonged contact (ex. caregiver or roommates).

## Can I catch H1N1 flu from eating pork or pork products?

No.

## Where can I get more information about the H1N1 flu?

You can go to the ASU Pandemic site at <http://www.asu.edu/pandemic/> or the CDC web site at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>, which has up-to-date information for students, employees, and parents on how to protect themselves. Medical questions about H1N1 flu can be directed to Campus Health Service at 480.965.1102 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Community Information and Referral has opened a 24-hour H1N1 flu hotline at 602.263.8856 and 1.800.352.3792.

## Should I travel abroad?

ASU Health Services recommend that students/employees consult with a health professional before traveling abroad. ASU Health Services are also available to provide counseling and preventative immunizations/medications to those who are traveling abroad.

## A student or employee is currently abroad. Should they return home?

Employees who are **currently well** can return home if they choose, but ASU is not requiring them to come home at this time. They should closely monitor their health and watch for flu-like symptoms. If **they develop symptoms or are currently ill**, they should seek medical attention in that country, if available, before attempting to come home. If they have the ASU Student Health Insurance through Aetna/Chickering, they should contact OnCall to get medical or travel assistance by calling **(from the U.S. - 1.866.525.1956 OR from outside the U.S. - 603.328.1956)**.

## A student/employee has recently returned from abroad. Should they return to work?

Employees who are **currently ill** should not return to work until they receive medical attention. They should tell their medical caregiver that they have recently been abroad. Those who are not ill may return to school or work, but if they develop symptoms, they should go to an ASU Health Service location.

## How Should I Manage Anxiety or Worry about H1N1 flu?

The news reports about H1N1 flu can cause anyone to feel anxious and worried. Information about how to manage anxiety about H1N1 flu can be obtained from the [American Psychological Association](#). Students who are feeling stressed or anxious about the H1N1 influenza A flu virus may call ASU counseling services. Contact information for all campus locations is available at <http://students.asu.edu/counseling>. For after-hours and weekend mental health emergencies, students may call EMPACT at 480.921.1006.