

August 20, 2009

Dear UNCW faculty, staff and students,

As the 2009-10 academic year gets underway, I want to remind everyone that the H1N1 flu is affecting campus communities across the nation and beyond, and is likely to continue to be a concern throughout the year. UNCW is monitoring the H1N1 flu, following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which remains the best source for up-to-date information, and we are ready to respond as needed.

The Student Health Center and Environmental Health & Safety are coordinating our efforts in partnership with many other departments on campus and our local public health department to prepare for the flu and ensure the health of the UNCW community. Much of this work involves planning with other health agencies to offer the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 vaccine to faculty, staff and students as the vaccines become available. Additional measures include more frequent cleaning of “high touch” surfaces, increased placement of hand sanitizer across campus and enhanced educational efforts.

H1N1 is similar in many ways to the seasonal flu. In fact, if a person is presenting symptoms of influenza-like illness (ILI), health officials do not recommend specific testing to determine if it is H1N1. Although the semester just began, there are persons on campus who already have been diagnosed with influenza-like illness. To protect ourselves and others from the spread of any type of flu, we must all be vigilant by taking the following precautions every day:

**Recognize symptoms** – Symptoms of the H1N1 flu are similar to the seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some persons also have experienced diarrhea and vomiting. Individuals who have had the flu are typically not considered contagious after 24 hours without fever.

**If sick, don't go to work or class** – If you exhibit an oral temperature of more than 100° F and at least one of the symptoms listed above, do not attend class or go to work. Stay home, and limit your contact with others. Please contact your health care provider immediately. Additional treatment may be recommended if you have certain pre-existing underlying conditions, so a discussion with your healthcare provider may be important. *If you do not have any of these pre-existing conditions, you likely will be advised not to see your healthcare provider to prevent further spread.*

Employees should call their regular health care provider, and students can call the [Student Health Center](#) located in Westside Hall on campus at 910.962.3280. Student Health will issue a letter for students who are diagnosed with influenza-like illness, stating that they should avoid contact with others while contagious, and they should not attend class until they are fever-free with no medication for 24 hours. Students should notify their professors by e-mail that they have flu-like symptoms and will not be able to attend class. Faculty members should help prevent the spread of flu by encouraging students who are symptomatic not to attend classes until they are fever-free with no medication for 24

hours. Faculty and staff who experience flu-like symptoms should advise their supervisors and utilize leave just as they would for any other illness in accordance with the link below:

Sick Leave Policy: [http://www.uncw.edu/policies/documents/08.213\\_Sick\\_Leave.pdf](http://www.uncw.edu/policies/documents/08.213_Sick_Leave.pdf)

For information about home care of persons with flu, including roommates, please see [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm).

**Wash your hands** - Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, especially after you cough or sneeze and before you eat. Alcohol-based hand cleaners (“hand sanitizer”) with 60 percent or greater alcohol content also are effective.

**Cover your cough** - If you cough or sneeze, cover it by using a tissue or coughing or sneezing into your upper sleeve. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

**Avoid touching your mouth, nose or eyes** - Avoid touching these areas, particularly after being in public places.

Faculty and staff can direct further questions to EH&S (910-962-3057); students can contact the Student Health Center (910-962-3280), or you can visit the following Web sites:

Centers for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)

North Carolina Public Health [www.ncpublichealth.com/](http://www.ncpublichealth.com/)

UNCW EH&S – H1N1 information Web site [www.uncw.edu/h1n1flu](http://www.uncw.edu/h1n1flu)

UNCW Communicable Disease Policy

[http://www.uncw.edu/policies/documents/05.331\\_Communicable\\_Disease\\_Policy%20070306.pdf](http://www.uncw.edu/policies/documents/05.331_Communicable_Disease_Policy%20070306.pdf)