

Message to FGCU Students, Faculty and Staff regarding H1N1 Flu

Dear FGCU Students, Faculty and Staff:

With last week's start of the fall semester, we are carefully monitoring the H1N1 flu, previously referred to as "swine flu." The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other health organizations are urging healthy practices and prevention since the severity of H1N1 flu outbreaks during the 2009-2010 academic year is not known, and there are concerns H1N1 transmission will spread more rapidly during the fall and winter.

There are important health guidelines the FGCU campus community should follow, and these are specified in the below sections for "Students" and "Employees (Faculty and Staff)." **However, the most important requirement is that if you develop flu symptoms, you should stay at home, or self-isolate, until at least 24 hours after you are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol.** While most people in the United States who have been sick with H1N1 have recovered, there have been hospitalizations and also deaths caused by the infection.

Please read the following information regarding (1) prevention; (2) flu symptoms; (3) medical assistance; (4) absence from class or work, and (5) ongoing monitoring efforts at FGCU. This information is not provided to cause undue alarm, but rather to educate everyone on how best to contribute to continued good health and safety in our campus community. Each of us is responsible for doing our part as a member of the FGCU community.

I. Prevention:

Since there is no vaccine available at this time to protect against the H1N1 virus, the CDC recommends the following steps to protect your health:

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. You should wash your hands for 15 to 20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
4. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
5. As noted above, if you are sick with flu-like illness, you should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
6. Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home by purchasing a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand cleaners, tissues and other such items that would help avoid your need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

II. Flu Symptoms:

The CDC has determined that H1N1 is contagious, and that it spreads from human to human in ways similar to seasonal flu. Flu viruses are spread primarily through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza; also sometimes people become infected

by touching a surface or object with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. The following are CDC-designated symptoms of H1N1:

1. Fever above 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius
2. Cough
3. Sore Throat
4. Runny or Stuffy Nose
5. Body Aches
6. Headache
7. Chills
8. Fatigue
9. Diarrhea and Vomiting (in some cases)

III. Medical Assistance:

- **Students:**
 - Students who are ill with fever and other flu symptoms should call FGCU's Student Health Services at (239) 590-7966 to schedule an appointment, or for medical advice and instruction.
- **Employees (faculty and staff):**
 - Employees should contact their primary care physician for medical evaluation, and treatment if needed.

IV. Absence from Class or Work:

- **Students:**
 1. Residential students diagnosed with or suspected of having the flu should not attend class or visit common campus areas such as the dining hall, student union, library, and fitness and aquatics centers.
 2. If possible, residential students should go home to recover off campus. If students cannot go home, they should wear a surgical mask while in common areas or if in a room with an uninfected person. Masks are available to students at the Student Health Clinic located in the Wellness Center.
 3. Students who do not live on campus should not attend class or come to campus if they have flu or flu-like symptoms until 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
 4. Students (residential and non-residential) with flu-like symptoms should not participate in FGCU activities, including with clubs, organizations, Athletics competitions, and intramural sports.
 5. Students who are well but have a family member or roommate with the flu can attend classes and visit campus common areas as usual. However, they should closely monitor their health and if they become ill, go home to recover off campus, or self-isolate if going home is not an option.
 6. The Division of Student Affairs is working with the Division of Academic Affairs to address issues of missed classes due to H1N1. Students must notify their instructors via email to inform them of their absence due to illness.
 7. Students who work on campus should not attend work if they have flu or flu-like symptoms. They should notify their work supervisor via email or telephone to inform them of their absence due to illness.

- **Employees (faculty and staff):**

1. Employees should contact and work directly with their primary care physician regarding symptoms, evaluation and treatment of flu.
2. Employees who are ill with flu-like symptoms should notify their supervisor that they are ill and not able to work. They should stay home, as directed above, until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
3. Sick Leave should be used by employees who are ill. In the event they are ill with the flu and have no accrued sick leave, employees should consult with the Office of Human Resources at (239) 590-1400.
4. Employees who are well but have a family member with the flu can attend work as usual. However, they should closely monitor their health and if they become ill, go home to recover.

V. Ongoing Monitoring:

1. The University is closely monitoring H1N1 and preparing in the event a serious outbreak on campus should occur. These efforts are being led by the University President and his Cabinet, comprised of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Vice President for Administrative Services & Finance; Vice President for Student Affairs; Vice President for University Advancement; Chief of Staff & University Spokesperson, and General Counsel.
2. Additional coordinating efforts are taking place with FGCU's Student Health Services and other medical professionals, as well as local, state and national health organizations, including the CDC.
3. In the event of a serious outbreak of H1N1 on campus, FGCU's Emergency Advisory Council will be activated to implement the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). This activation has been used in the past with great success at FGCU when faced with threats of hurricanes and wildfires. It addresses emergency preparation, response, and communications, as well as continuity of essential operations, and resumption of regular operations after an emergency. FGCU's Chief of Police and Public Safety leads the emergency team.
4. The CDC has extensive online resources about H1N1, and this information can be accessed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>. Specific CDC information about H1N1 and schools, colleges and universities is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools/>. FGCU information and campus messages about H1N1 can be accessed from the University's website at: <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/HealthServices/h1n1.html>.

Thank you for your attention to these important health matters. As new or additional information becomes available, we will share it with you. I look forward to a healthy and productive 2009-2010 year at FGCU.

Wilson Bradshaw, Ph.D.
President
Florida Gulf Coast University