



**Environment, Health, and Safety, Office of Risk Services
University of California Office of the President**

**SAFE-T-GRAM #8
H1N1 Pandemic Flu Update**

What measures can I take to prevent from spreading the H1N1 influenza virus?

The H1N1 virus is not the same as the seasonal flu, but taking care of the flu requires following the same basic common sense rules:

- The treatment is the same: **Stay home if you are sick**; don't come back to work until 24 hours after your symptoms have disappeared, and if you have persistent symptoms, contact your physician.
- Prevention is also the same: Practice good health hygiene habits and follow the precautions below to protect yourself from getting sick.
- Don't do any special cleaning other than what you would do if anyone in your office who comes down with the flu. Cleaning beyond your normal custodial routine is unnecessary.
- Staff or students who have been exposed but don't have influenza-like symptoms should not be sent home and don't need to stay home.
- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or "**Sneeze into Your Sleeve**". Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- If you get sick with influenza, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

What preventive measures can I take to protect myself from getting sick?

- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer units can be found at all UCOP offices.
- **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose or mouth. Viruses spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

What surfaces are most likely to be sources of contamination?

Viruses can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with viruses and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. Droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air. Viruses can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk, for example, and then touches their own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

How long can the influenza virus remain viable on objects (such as books and doorknobs)?

Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for up to 2-8 hours after being deposited on the surface.

CDC Recommendations for a 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccination Program

CDC recommends a vaccination campaign to target high-priority populations in order to reduce the health and societal impact of the H1N1 influenza virus. A vaccine should be available in mid-October and will require two injections that are one month apart. The following four populations have been designated by CDC as high-priority populations for receiving the first rounds of the vaccine:

- Students and staff (all ages) associated with schools (K-12th grade) and children (age ≥ 6 months) and staff (all ages) in child care centers.
- Pregnant women, children 6 months – 4 years of age, new parents and household contacts of children < 6 months of age.
- Non-elderly adults (age < 65 years) with medical conditions that increase the risk of complications of influenza.
- Health care workers and emergency services sector personnel (regardless of age).

If you or members of your family meet the criteria as one of the targeted populations, contact your health care provider regarding vaccination.

What additional resources are available regarding the H1N1 virus?

Go to the website www.flu.gov