



Student Health Services

For all your health needs..

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INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI)

What is Influenza?

Influenza (also called flu) is a viral infection of the nose, throat, trachea, and bronchi (air passages). Outbreaks occur almost every year, usually in late fall and winter (seasonal flu). Novel H1N1 flu is a new and very different influenza virus that is spreading worldwide among people. Flu viruses are almost always spread from person to person by droplets that are coughed or sneezed into the air. They can also be spread by the hands of an infected person who has touched their mouth or nose.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of seasonal flu and H1N1 flu tend to start suddenly. The usual symptoms are:

- Chills and fever (often 101 to 103 degrees F)
- Headaches and general muscle aches
- Sore throat, runny nose and cough
- Fatigue and lethargy
- Occasional vomiting and diarrhea

How is it diagnosed?

Influenza can usually be diagnosed from your symptoms. Your healthcare provider may examine you to rule out other types of infection such as a bacterial respiratory infection. Health officials are not conducting lab tests to confirm cases of H1N1 unless the illness is serious enough for hospitalization. Limited random studies are obtained on outpatients by the Kansas State Health Dept. for reporting purposes.

How is the flu treated?

Flu symptoms are usually managed at home with non-prescription medication. Get plenty of rest. Drink a lot of liquid such as water, juice, and non-caffeinated beverage. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be taken for control of fever and discomfort. Decongestants may help relieve runny nose. A routine prescription of anti-viral medication for mild disease, or for any case in an otherwise healthy person where hospitalization is not being considered, is discouraged strongly by the Kansas Dept. of Health and the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention). Self isolation is a CDC recommendation through the illness until free of fever (less than 100 degrees F.) occurs for 24 hours while on no fever reducing medication. If possible, college students are encouraged to return to their family homes until they no longer have fever and well enough to manage independently.

How long will the effects last?

Symptoms usually last for 3-7 days. Improvement of symptoms usually begins within 2 days.

Immediate medical attention is required if any of the following symptoms develop:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent vomiting or unable to drink adequate fluid
- Progressive lethargy, diminished alertness or confusion
- Unrelenting fever over 101 degrees F.

Prevention

Flu vaccination for the seasonal flu (Trivalent vaccine) will be available in September. ***The seasonal vaccine will not protect you against H1N1.*** The H1N1 vaccine will not be released until mid-October or November and will require two injections separated by 3 weeks. People with influenza are contagious one day before onset of their symptoms and during their febrile illness which may be 5-7 days. Contact with those that are ill should be limited to a designated person who observes strict contact and respiratory precautions.

What do I do regarding class attendance?

It will be the responsibility of the student to communicate (preferably via email) their illness with their instructor. Arrangements for the make-up of classroom work will be at the direction of the instructor.